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# Violence, Symbols, and the Archaeological Record: A Case Study of Cahokia's Mound 72

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VIOLENCE, SYMBOLS, AND THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD: A CASE  
STUDY OF CAHOKIA'S MOUND 72

VIOLENCE, SYMBOLS, AND THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD: A CASE  
STUDY OF CAHOKIA'S MOUND 72

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

Acts of violence are not always easily distinguished in their form. Given the additional difficulties caused by the obscure nature of the archaeological record, it is no wonder that interpretations of these behaviors are so skewed both between and within fields of research. There is little consistency in this academic dialogue, which prevents researchers from grappling with the larger perspectives that should be approached. For instance, just how far back in our human history have events such as genocide occurred? Are these modern in origin? The scale of ancient events and our anthropological scopes need more adjustment to the unique conditions of the archaeological context if we seek to gain the deep-time perspective.

In this dissertation, I am opening that dialogue between the fields of anthropology by comparing modern cases of violence to some events in the distant past by using Mound 72, Cahokia as the case study. Ultimately, I conclude that our current definitions of populations that are protected by international laws do not reflect current anthropological thinking, across all fields, about the flexibility in notions of population identity and identification. The rigid interpretations that have been employed to date in these laws are too restrictive and do little to enhance the protection for many targeted populations.

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This dissertation is approved for  
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## **DEDICATION**

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to those who touched my heart and soul throughout the years:

To Duncan R. Luke for sticking by my side and making each day happier than the last.

To my “parental units” for telling me I could.

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## **--CHAPTER ONE--**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Capable of concurrently performing both great and terrible actions, human social behaviors will never cease to intrigue. The oscillations between violent and peaceful events help shape the relationships and socio-political routes taken by populations in defining themselves and others. The contexts of these relationships can then be constructed with the symbols of the conquerors imposed onto the conquered, including using the conquered individuals in ritual performances social difference and/or of important mythic events. War and peace are not discrete social constructions, but they overlap and recursively inform any future social relationships between individuals and groups. Archaeologists are able to reconstruct aspects of these related behaviors from archaeological evidence; thus revealing contingent social relationships that connect communities. For instance, in the Mississippian cultures living in the Midwest and into the Southeast, we can distinguish items included in archaeological contexts that denote peace and those that were derived from contexts of war. This is because there has been widespread continuity in the material items used to signal these behaviors (Hall 1997; Dye 2009). These specialized items included: pipes, clubs, arrows, axes, and other items that are identifiable in both archaeological and historic contexts. The widespread continuity in these items demonstrate their stability as symbolic markers.

The burial of several groups of killed and non-killed individuals in Mound 72, at the prehistoric Mississippian site of Cahokia in Illinois, demonstrate how complicated relationships that developed from religious and secular behaviors can be tangled in

archaeological contexts. This mortuary context importantly includes performances of mythic relationships (Brown 2003), while also performing ideas of social difference that included gender, age, and other differences that are interpreted in this discussion as related to captivity status. Since the Mound 72 context contains evidence of multiple forms of violence, it is an interesting case study to explore ideas of overlap in patterns of violence in an archaeological setting, as well as forcing us to deconstruct how these categories have been conceptualized and applied in previous studies.

In current contexts, anthropologists can observe how warring and peaceful behaviors develop and shift, and how they are often occurring simultaneously. Despite the impossibilities of gaining entirely precise and absolute insight into any specific individual's personal circumstances, or the range in their personally defined identities in both modern and archaeological settings, we should not lose sight of the concept of shifting and fluid subjectivity; whereby individuals and groups can coetaneously identify with differing factions and perform actions that are seemingly contradictory on the surface. The continued awareness of these situational contexts, and their resulting fluctuations in identity and positionality, enable researchers to avoid unintentionally writing about violence in both romanticizing and diminishing fashions. Keeping within this frame encourages our reconstructions to delve more deeply into the intersections between interpersonal relationships that are formed based on many coexisting relations and can best be described as contingently formed (Piot 1999).

Looking to our past and using archaeological examples in the exploration of violence fosters the deep-time perspective that only archaeology can provide. This perspective also helps us view how these actions have developed and transitioned over

long periods of human history; pushing the presence of these encounters into the distant past. The longevity of the practices of war, peace, and violence, in general, are crucial areas of research for those who hope to understand population-level social relationships that are sometimes tenuous. Some researchers have even written about group-level violence as a recent adaptation, and even portray non-westerners as incapable of performing violent actions prior to European expansion (Blick 1988). This reluctance to include indigenous populations in the discussions of communal violence has been largely critiqued (Chacon and Dye 2007; Martin and Frayer 1997), and is pointed out as a blatant form of romanticism derived from Western guilt in how indigenous populations have been historically mistreated by colonial governments and intellectualism alike. It is important to know and understand the longevity and range of these events, even if all we can gather are complicated and incomplete contexts of the situations from which they developed. If we gloss over the past, or refused to critically evaluate these contexts with a current understanding of flexibility of these behaviors, then we will learn nothing from these experiences.

The presentations of romanticized views of past social interactions have recently shifted. More scholars are participating in careful discussions which assess communal violence in prehistoric and in non-state societies; however, there is still a clear sense of romanticism. For instance, the perspective that indigenous individuals and populations participated in actions of violence because they had to in order to survive in a beast-filled world, or were simplistically performing their beliefs—without a critical evaluation of the extent of these practices—still lingers. The performance of mythic ideas or rituals do not need to exclude relationships involving secular violence. A similar romanticism is

contained in some current *mythico-histories* (Malkki 1995) recorded about modern violence. In some cases, populations who were previously attacked by a competing population that was seen as warlike and destructive caused the former population to interpret their own actions, no matter how brutal or even if they were preemptive, as performed in self-defense (Malkki 1995; Mamdani 2001). This bias remains particularly visible in the writings that act to justify violent events, such as large-scale wars, and systematic killings of populations or identifiable groups who were not deemed desirable for social participation by their attackers (Destexhe 1995; Markusen 1996; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004:14), but is also in operation on a smaller scale.

Furthermore, the scale of recent events casts large shadows in which past instances and eruptions of violence are hidden: rendered as hardly comparable because of simplistic and misleading population casualty counts. For instance, genocide tends to be linked to only very large-scale killing events while massacres are used to explain smaller-scale killings; these categories do not explain differences and similarities in the root causes and intentionality that should be the focal point in explaining distinctions in forms of violence. Exploring these dark events allows us to reveal more details about the social dynamics of past contexts, even when they are not peaceful constructed. Additionally, this refocusing points to present conditions that are sometimes striking in their scale as enabled by industrialization. As such, these events demonstrate that the scale of modern violence cannot be used to evaluate past contexts. This is because the scale of violent events are limited by technology, not just by the motivations of the perpetrators. The limits of the technology used in these events can disguise the behaviors that were intended to eradicate another population, by limiting the number of individuals killed.

## **The Development of this Dissertation**

The more data that I gathered and compiled, the more difficult it became to develop arguments that avoided or ignored discussions that characterized the violence experienced by some of the Mound 72 interments as related to their assumed status as ritual sacrifice participants. It was apparent that to begin my assessment of the violent behavior used in the construction of this mortuary context that I first needed to deconstruct how researchers categorize and understand violence. It became additionally apparent that the boundaries between forms of violence, and discussions of longevity of specific behaviors, were absent in archaeological interpretations of violence (Chacon and Dye 2007; Martin and Frayer 1997). I asked myself why these discussions were absent and/or avoided, only to settle on the conclusion that the topic is somewhat an anthropological taboo. Instead of *missing* the violent events (Geertz 1995) I was delving deeply into these and their archeological reconstructions. This continued the path of recent discussions which demonstrate that prior to colonialism indigenous populations were capable and willing to perform the same heinous actions that were once believed to be derived from European behaviors—brought to distant regions during periods of European expansion. This topical taboo led to a initial discomfort and even my own silent reluctance to continue to pursue this topic, which was enveloped by the history and images surrounding violent events, until I realized that I was participating in the same romanticism (Ellingson 2001; Galloway 2002; Pagden 1982, 1993; Rabasa 2000).

What made this endeavor more difficult was that I was not looking to simply explore warfare models, but instead I wanted to know what the violence exhibited in Mound 72 *meant*. Were these individuals killed and interred in this mound victims of

warfare or other violent actions? Can we identify when these actions overlap? Were these victims and non-victims both part of a mythic performance demonstrating Cahokian piety and reverence, or were Cahokians performing their communal identity that dominated outsider populations? Did the killed individuals' participation work to gain prestige for their respective kin groups? And if any of the proceeding questions could be answered “yes,” then how could I go about demonstrating these links in my reconstruction of these past circumstances? Would meaning being obtainable on any level? The answers to these questions could not be explained using theories of warfare, but perhaps there were answers in the larger study of communal violence.

Violence research is a related but distinctive field from archaeological explorations of warfare and raiding behaviors. Warfare studies are often focused on reporting the extent and context of events that often had visible, material goals, and tend to relate these behaviors to strategies for gaining resources and prestige in these contexts. These studies ignore the questions that deal with group identity (and ethnicity) formation that can sometimes emerge or gain strength through violent interactions and communal performances of group identity. Additionally, these communally held identities can in some cases, albeit limited, be reconstructed by archaeologists. In other words, it was not warfare that I was most interested in researching for this project; rather my interests were more focused on the larger categories of violence and the performances of communal identities through these actions.

Further, I wanted to explore how archaeologists reconstruct and classify violent events. What I found was that there was little discussion focused on developing a language of violence that could be used to categorize these events. We need to create a

flexible interpretive scope that goes beyond singular sites and into the regional dynamics. What this means is that instead of reporting violence as isolated events we need to continue to rigorously relate these events to their region. I do not think that any archaeologists would disagree with the importance in elucidating the regional dynamics, but we need to commit more fully to these goals.

How do past events of violence inform the present? How have the expressions of violent acts changed? Is genocide a modern behavior or can it be demonstrated in the distant past? For months, these three questions repeated in the dark recesses of my mind despite my aforementioned efforts to avoid them. As I tried to move away from these and refocus my discussion on the deciphering of mythic symbolism, abundantly included in the Mound 72 context, these questions developed into shouts. The shifts and overlaps in the mythic symbolism furthered my determination to get back to previous questions. I could no longer silence these lingering thoughts because I realized that they had significantly shaped that mortuary performance and context, and to ignore these I would have continued to simply *miss* or further overlook the violence.

After returning to the original questions that I had proposed to research surrounding Mississippian expressions and patterns of violence I then had to ask myself whose story I wanted to tell; the captor's or the captive's. I chose to explore the latter, because it allowed me to demonstrate several important principles relating to current and recent used mortuary theories. Notably, this discussion includes the inclusion-exclusion of individuals and groups into a new population, and so the interpretation of multi-population contexts was essential. These become especially befuddled when dealing with captive populations and notions of status, position, and even authority. These notions are



often gleaned by archaeologists as shared or are interpreted as segmented parts contained with the society at large, and are then reduced in the mortuary interpretations. These are both hugely problematic interpretations when the population is clearly not homogeneous. What is conveyed is the imposed status, position, and removal of authority by the population of the captor. We should not simply squeeze the captives into the local social system, particularly when the captives of unknown status, and not simply “low status” individuals (i.e., these captives are distinctive from other low status Cahokians) are made to participate in lethal activities.

Heterogeneous populations are currently the bane of mortuary theorists. First, when we are looking at the burial context of a site where there is evidence of killed foreign individuals interred alongside the local residents, we should not try to fit these into simple categories of economic, political, nor even religious status. There is little reason to believe that these statuses or positions were the primary mortuary symbolism, nor the structure shaping all burial contexts. For instance, if we take James Brown's (2003) recent notion of Mound 72 at Cahokia as a tableau for mythic performances, then economic arguments (i.e., those that directly relate the grave goods to concepts of status or positionality) might not have been at all important in the construction of Mound 72. In these cases, the grave goods may be more appropriately viewed more as props, costumes—these are still hugely important and are often imbued with great social and performative power, yet they are not necessarily tied to the individual who is using these. Secondly, there is little reason to assume that the foreigners would participate in the economic, social, or political status systems of their captor's population. Therefore, relating the captive experience at Cahokia to the experience of the Natchez may not

provide the best fit. Among the Natchez, the mortuary rituals of the elite Suns included the killing of retainers (Swanton 1911; 1946). These retainers were members of the Natchez population and gained prestige for their kin by willingly, at least by performing their willingness to die to accompany their leaders, which would not have been available to foreigners. These ideas are developed later in chapters five and six. Lastly, and this is likely a result of my extensive anthropological training, I felt a personal desire to tell the story that had been glossed over in the past.

## **Approach to the Research Questions**

### *Comparative Method*

A comparative approach was used to isolate patterns between modern and ancient events. Since many of the individuals interred in the Mound 72 context were killed it was appropriate to dig deeper into the anthropological and archaeological literature on violence and captivity. This broadly comparative approach encourages the mortuary interpretations to expand beyond economic models of status. This then allows archaeologists to connect larger symbolic themes that are present at several locations that have traditionally been ignored based on the quantity and quality of materials used to reconstruct these themes.

### *Deconstruction of the Categories of Violence*

There is little scholarly cohesion with the terminology used to describe acts of violence. Some, like Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois (2004) see violence as continuum with no clear boundaries between forms. This interpretation see the forms

as overlapping and as not easily identifiable. The utility of this view of violence as a continuum is that this would allow the monitoring or at least the evaluation of acts of violence as leading to other more severe forms. However, it does have some large complications and a reductionist quality. For example, if we were to put something like domestic violence on this continuum, should we view and treat the perpetrator of these actions as an eventual potential perpetrator of genocide? Although this was not Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004) goal in explaining violence as a continuum of genocide it seems to reduce the motivations of different acts of violence and shifts the focus to the scale and intensity of the event(s). It is not as simple as to say that there are no categories of violence in Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois analysis, in fact their anthology is divided in to sections that include both physical and non-physical (i.e., structural violence, and the politics of poverty) forms of violence with the goal of classification. However, the concept of a genocide continuum may unintentionally reduce the impact of acts of violence seen as lower on the scale. Furthermore, how should we measure these acts of violence?

On the other side of interpreting terms of violence, some follow the strict letter of definitions and by doing so limit the inclusion of events that do not conform perfectly to the definitions of each category. For example, the term *genocide* was first defined by Rafael Lemkin following the Nazi led Holocaust in World War II and the 1915 Armenian exile. The resulting definition includes protection for individuals who are targeted based on race, religion, ethnicity, and nationality. What is hugely problematic with this definition is that simply does not work in many cases of genocide because of the dated view of population identity. It was constructed to help explain what Lemkin thought was

a new trend in warfare, what Mark Markusen terms as a trend in *total war*, where the entire population, not just the combatants are included in violent actions. I argue that this behavior should not be constructed by the intellectual community as focused on actions against racial or other biological population differences which perhaps are not as clearly defined as previously thought.

Interestingly, the biological categories overlap so much with the social categories that even those who are deeply engaged in these behaviors are not always certain of the biological backgrounds of those whom are targeted for destruction, and thus require identification cards, or other markers, to make these relationships visible.

Problematically, perspectives that seek biologically or ethnically distinctive populations targeted by violence can encourage people and agencies to falsely assume that only one group will be targeted in the enactment of these behaviors. We need to remember that these activities do not target the “them” but can also target the “not us” for destruction. Remember, the Nazis did not target one population but targeted several groups who they disassociated with to the point of dehumanization and widely accepted acquiescence and even systematic participation by ordinary citizens who simply allowed others to enact these behaviors (Kovach 2006).

To further situate myself theoretically, I do not believe that any derivative of cultural evolution can sufficiently explain the emergence or forms that shape violent events (Carneiro 1970; Knauff 1987). The degree of socio-political complexity and advances in technology may increase the visibility of these events, but only as aided by the media and the temporal proximity of the event to the present. In other words, violence is not part of a societal progression nor is it linear in its development and performance.

This stance is how I can justify my use of examples from distant cultures and temporal periods. These broad examples were intentionally included to reduce the urge of readers to create those linear connections. Past populations thought about and constructed categories of otherness, thus distinguishing social groups in a similar manner that they do today. As with modern populations, these populations include those that are more or less tolerant of outsiders based on a wide array of factors. These factors cannot be fully explained by using approaches that stay within their cultural, biological, environmental, or socio-evolutionary bounds.

### *Steps Used in this Analysis*

There were several steps that I used in completing this comparative analysis. These steps were used to relate the various sources of data for this project, outlined in chapter three, but should not be used as a specific series to apply outside this case study. The analytic units would need to be refined based on the availability and access to the various data sources.

Step One: I first needed to expose some of the similarities and differences between burials in the Mound 72 mortuary context. This included isolating distinctions that were being visibly constructed these differential burials. Mode of death (killed or not killed), grave style (mass, multiple, single, pit, non-pit, primary, and secondary burials), and the demographic composition (age, biological sex, and biological relatedness) of the individuals in the Mound 72 burials were evaluated. These data came from the primary records of the burials, which included an excavation of Jerome Rose's file cabinets; who was the bioarchaeological researcher during Melvin Fowler's excavations of Mound 72.

These cabinets contain the original burial forms and many unofficial photographs of the skeletal remains that have never been published. Prior to this project these have only been used by Rose.

Using these data, I ultimately conclude that the lines between the forms of violence are messy and overlapped in the Mound 72 context. However, this messiness does not cause this to be a futile research endeavor. Researchers can still gain insight into the forms of violence even when these are more vague than we would like for interpretive purposes; meaning that although the lines between warring and non-warring behaviors were not simple to discern, through the bioarchaeological and mortuary reconstructions, there were still enough clues present to indicate that these behaviors were active in the construction of this burial context.

Step Two: The Mound 72 burials were then compared to archaeological contexts from the larger region to see if these burials were indeed unique to this Middle Mississippian mortuary tradition. Overall, the burials were not unique when viewed based on individual-traits that were isolated in Step 1. However, when combined, these burials did create an arrangement that was unique. This arrangement is even different from other Mississippian mortuary contexts that share similarities in isolated features. This difference is, in part, because of the quantity of females included, but it is also because of the emphasis on social differences included in the arrangement of the various Mound 72 interments.

Step Three: I then explored oral traditions, iconographic styles, historic accounts and modern cases of violence that included overlap between patterns of secular and religious motivations to find analogous behaviors. Though a few of these burials could

relate to sacrifice practices there are shortcomings in the use of these models as discussed throughout this dissertation. Therefore, these data were consulted with the goal of exploring alternative interpretations to the sacrifice models.

### *Goals of this Project*

There were several goals in using both modern and ancient examples in this study on violence. First, there is a need to pursue the longevity of these events since some have been erroneously limited to research focused on modern experiences. The resultant deep-time perspective encourages researchers to recognize changes in violent and peaceful behaviors that are less focused on counting casualties and are more focused on the performance of group level identities. These identities can be created through the enactment of mythic and group-level relationships, and are sometimes enacted through patterned communal violence. These point to a longer presence of some forms of these behaviors in human history than previously thought.

Secondly, we need to test the boundaries of these modern terms in past contexts to evaluate what is being said by our archaeological reconstructions. Can we easily fit behaviors into discrete categories? Where does one form end and another begin? My own perceptions of the bounded nature of the categories of violence changed fairly drastically throughout this project. I had began this research with the understanding that scale, and specifically as demonstrated by the number of casualties, was one of the primary factors that should be used to determine the type of violence. Quickly, the concept of scale fell apart because it was not capable of explaining the motives that resulted in the enactment of violence, and it was further unable to account for victims who had not been killed.

With my primary goals having been stated above, two additional goals in writing this dissertation comes to mind. I am not writing this *to prove* that the behavior at during the early expansion period at Cahokia fell into any specific category of violence, rather this project demonstrates that the sacrificial model is not the only available interpretation for the killed individuals in the Mound 72 burials. There are several forms of violence evident in this context and attempting to reduce them to a singular form is futile. Instead, I explore these distinguished forms of violence with the goal of demonstrating the overlap in these sets. Second, I do not intend to reconstruct all the assumed relationships (interpersonal, political, religious, economic, *et cetera*) that Cahokians were negotiating, which is an impossible task; rather, my goal is to discuss the context of Mound 72 as fully as possible without relying heavily on economic models of status and position as the interpretive frame. Economic interpretations of mortuary contexts have been greatly critiqued (Carr 1995; Gillespie 2001; Hodder 1991, 1995; Pearson 1993; Shanks and Tilley 1977; Sullivan and Mainfort 2010), as is discussed at length in chapter seven.

### *Application*

As mentioned in the proceeding section, my own research is ultimately about the longevity and performance of violence more than it is about reconstructing prehistoric patterns of warfare. This distinction is sometimes conflated in current discussions of Mississippian period events of violence. Sometimes the prehistoric events include warring behaviors, sometimes not. These warring and other violent behaviors have appeared in some archaeological literature that describes this as a “warrior cult,” also termed the “Southern Death Cult.” There, various indigenous populations have been



lumped into a category that reflects an essentialized identity. This identity is focused on warfare, and can include related messages of death and destruction. There are still whispers of a “Mississippian message of violence” among researchers. These, however, also fall into the same essentialism trap, and are potentially enacting violence to these archaeological populations by denying them social flexibility and positionality in lieu of using singular identity attributes for descriptive purposes. In other words, these descriptions are akin to the recreating ideas of a “Southern Death Cult,” and should be cautiously approached. To explain further, these interpretations do not include the identity of all members of these populations, nor do they look beyond the surface of the violence in order to more completely understand the social dynamics that can allow violent and peaceful interactions to coexist.

As there are timely concerns and data constraints on any research, I had decided to keep the focus on interactions that included the remains of multiple individuals. In this vein, I included sites from the Southeast and Midwest that exhibit raiding, warfare, and other visibly violent behaviors. These ritualized behaviors were then compared to modern cases of a specific forms of violence that are oriented on the goal of population eradication—genocide. This comparison requires more continued thought and careful evaluation in archaeological settings, as it is usually left out of discussions of archaeological contexts of violence. Archaeology has the potential to demonstrate not only the longevity, but the range in settings and materials in these events can no doubt challenge the conventional views of the modernity of these events. In doing so, the goal is to test the contexts in which these behaviors emerge, and to demonstrate that the motivation behind the violence, not the scale of casualties should be used to describe

these behaviors.

Specifically, this critique and deconstruction presents some of the issues that surround the descriptions, categorization, recognition, as well as avoidance in using the term genocide in archaeological contexts. The Mound 72 Cahokia data provides a unique and interesting case study for these questions. Here, captives were taken to Cahokia, killed in a variety of ways, and then were interred in the same mound as other killed and non-killed individuals. Some of these individuals were arranged in ways that symbolically signaled the mythic cycles that are recognizable from historic Native American populations. These symbols extend further back into the Woodland periods at sites in the Lower Mississippi, such as the Caddoan George C. Davis site in Texas, where several individuals were buried in the “bird-man” pose (Schambach 2010, personal communication), and with regalia that corresponds to iconographic images of the falcon dancers. This pose is especially recognizable in two of the burials contained in Mound C: burials 118 and 161 were both laid out with the bird-man pose (Story 1997). These individuals were interred during different stages of the mound construction. Burial 161 was interred during the Stage III (AD 880-1100) mound construction. Burial 118 was interred later, during Stage IV (AD 1100-1260) mound construction. Accompanying these individuals were artifacts including: a greenstone “spud” at the right knee of each burial, a tubular shell bead belt, an *Alba* arrow point cache, and copper with pearl earspools. Although burial 161 was poorly preserved, the arrangement of associated grave goods corresponds to the arrangement of burial 118, and therefore, the body would have been likely arranged similar to burial 118.

At Mound 72 secular ideas of population distinctions converge and appear tangled

with religious beliefs encoded in the symbolic layout incorporated in this mound. For instance, the choice of using distinctive groups of females in this performance of mythic belief is as fascinating and it was purposeful. James Brown (2003, 2005) and Kent Reilly (2010) both describe the interesting arrangement of Mound 72 as part of a mythic tableau: ritualized use of space that is embedded with meaning and can be viewed as an idealized scene. I agree, but we cannot ignore the fact that there were no Cahokians, from the immediate and hinterland areas in Illinois, killed in these rituals.

## **The Chapters**

The discussion is structured as follows below. In chapter two I present changing theoretical trends in the discussion of general theories of violence. This development includes theories that relate violence to biological, cultural, environmental, and evolutionary motivations. Much has changed in the anthropological perspectives of violence throughout the history of the field, and the field continues to develop. Use of multi-field approaches are increasingly popular, as the monocausal interpretations tend to fall short of explaining why populations are motivated to pursue peaceful or violent interactions. These changes are reflected by theoretical trends and by shifts in the modernist to postmodernist perceptions of cultures and behaviors; generally, anthropologists place importance on elasticity rather than rigidity in these concepts. Although ideas of niche competition, cohesive inclusion, and factionalization are included in this discussion, these are not included at the expense of questions of group identification and population identity.

Additionally, in chapter two, I also present the idea of fluid subjectivity that is

borrowed from cultural performance theories to discuss the shifts in *positionality*, and to accommodate dynamic group-level identities that are largely elusive in archaeological contexts. Instead of specifically assigning these identities, we ought to recognize their presence and report only those that we can readily identify based on the symbolic signals that those burying the dead assigned. These are imposed identities, but as identities are both internally and externally constructed, we cannot and should not ignore these data—even though they admittedly give only partial identities, and rarely, if ever, individual level identities. Population-level identification is possible to reconstruct, but should not be assumed to be simple biological differences.

It is important to note that I do not discuss the group-level identities as simply *ethnicity*, as this is only one of the many shared group-level identities that is possible. Other communally held identities can include clan based identity, those that are derived from specific roles or crafting abilities, political and religious based faction identities, *ad infinitum*. These identities often can and do overlap, and ethnicity may not have even played as important of a role as other shared identities among indigenous North Americans until they encountered Europeans (Gallay 2002); the Europeans used it to define and classify populations. Gallay (2002:113) notes that some indigenous North American populations were more inclined to value clan based identities over those interpreted as ethnicities. Social interactions, including those at the group level are complex constructions that are not fixed, and as such require flexible interpretations.

I open chapter three with a discussion of prehistoric violence in the New World. Here I present the current bioarchaeological, ethnohistoric, and archaeological lines of evidence that I used in creating this dissertation, and these sources are both described and

critiqued. Although each of these fields offered excellent data and theories that by themselves greatly advance their research areas, I prefer to take a multi-field approach and incorporate pertinent data from all of these areas. The goal of this is to explore the presence, role, and attempt to get at the meaning behind behaviors with the recognition that there will always be gaps in the obtainable cultural knowledge of any archaeological event. However, there is a continued need to further develop and understand contexts of violence. This need continuously crosses subfield divides in anthropology (Komar and Buikstra 2008; Martin and Frayer 1997; Riches 1986; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004; Valdez 2009). Therefore, research needs to actively pursue a multi-field approach that can accommodate these goals. For instance, there needs to be a more rigorous and purposeful inclusion of the prehistoric cases of violence to add the much needed deep-time component, which only archaeology can provide. This is elegantly incorporated into Lynne Goldstein's chapter in Buikstra and Beck's (2006:375-388) bioarchaeology text, as a biocultural perspective. Much can be learned from each of the fields that explore the contexts of violence, and we should strive to be on the same page with our descriptive classifications. As anthropologists we are in a unique position to develop and refine classifications of violent acts because we are able to link deep-time, the biological evidence, and fresh understandings of constructive cultural processes; thus gaining insight into how these actions are developed and performed in their cultural contexts.

I close the discussion in chapter three by looking toward the recent applications of descriptive terms to explain patterns of violence. These often fail to recognize the interrelatedness and overlap between these actions in lieu of strict characterizations. Often there are multiple forms (structural, physical, psychological, *et cetera*) that are

performed simultaneously, and under circumstances that may not be as straightforward as we would like for practical interpretive purposes. For instance, sometimes researchers inadvertently romanticize lethal actions by prehistoric populations by referring to these actions as “ritual” or “ceremonial” in order to distinguish them from ideas of “war.” The problem is that warfare, and other forms of violence, more often than not are ritualized (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004; Walker 1997:166). As with most rituals, the rituals associated with warfare and other acts of violence can range vastly in their display based on cultural context, and can reflect individual variation. To elaborate further, violence enacted in secrecy versus public forums will often contain variations, as the perpetrators and victims will react to the presence of witnesses. These reactions should not automatically be assumed to heighten or decrease the intensity of the actions, as that would shift based on the context and goals of those involved and those witnessing the event. Furthermore, cultures inform those involved directly and those witnessing to the accepted range of reactions. In some of the captive accounts from the early colonial period in the New World, captives were expected to fight back, even when they were clearly outnumbered with little to no chance of survival (Cole 2000; Demos 1994; Driver 1966). Here the captives would gain honor among their own kin for bravely defying those whom intended to continue to torture and harm these individuals.

Chapter four is focused on the larger picture in patterns of violence in the Midwest and Southeast. Data from sites that were involved in raiding, warfare, and human sacrifice were included in this chapter, but it is only a small portion of the sites that exhibit these activities that were included for practical purposes. Again, the broad outline of violence presented in this chapter is not comprehensive to all events in the

Midwest and Southeast from AD 900-1350, nor is it outlining all of the populations living in these regions during that time range. Instead, this chapter is intended to demonstrate the range in these behaviors during the later prehistoric periods in those regions. The secondary goals of this chapter include presenting sites where differences in the patterned violence are clear. That is to say that I wanted to explore sites with endemic, episodic, and religiously motivated actions.

The case study of Cahokia's Mound 72 is presented in chapter five. I begin this chapter with general characteristics of the site location and its significant position in the Mississippi River floodplain. This floodplain environment no doubt shaped more than the landscape, but also would have shaped the cultures that chose to reside in this location (Brady and Ashmore 1999). The floodplain provided the nutrient-rich soils that enabled the maize-based agriculture to flourish by enabling the necessary food surpluses to sustain large populations, and this environment embodied the mythically important geologic conditions encoded in oral traditions (Bailey 1995). Namely this location marked the confluence of not only the great rivers, but further positioned the Cahokians into their strategic trade economy location.

I continue this chapter with notes on its socio-political organization of the Cahokians, and introduce the prevailing theories of this academically well discussed site. The academic focus on Cahokia site is resultant from its sheer size and sphere of influence throughout much of the Southeast during the AD 1100-1350 time frame. It comprises the largest prehistoric earthwork construction north of Mexico, and has even retained its significant position in non-academic circles in recent times. For instance, one can visit the site on days of solstice and equinox and witness the neo-pagan appropriation and

continued indigenous use of the modernly reconstructed woodhenge feature located west of Monk's Mound. Despite widespread interest in this site, there is much unknown about its inhabitants. Only small portions of the site have been explored archaeologically, and much had been destroyed by modern uses of the landscape. It will continue to intrigue, frustrate, confuse, and create a sense of awe in many future generations.

Chapter six is focused on the topic of captivity at Cahokia. This behavior was primarily enacted on foreigner females during the early and mid-construction stages of the Mound 72 mortuary context. Later, the captives included a mixed group of males and females, and the decapitated and handless bodies of four male captives that may have participated more willingly than other captives included here. Although this present discussion is on the Mound 72 females, there is no reason to think that these were the only captives killed at Cahokia. As demonstrated by the victims included in the Wilson Mound burials (two females and two children) others were selectively killed at Cahokia (Alt and Pauketat 2007), although their categorization as foreigner or local is unknown.

This chapter also includes a discussion on the range of captive experiences recorded in the historic period. Here, the variance based on the captor populations' beliefs, and on the behavior of the captives is highlighted. This includes a focus on prestige-gaining strategies available to some captives. The major objectives of this chapter are to demonstrate that there were large differences in the treatment of captives recorded in the historic period, and that there were structured behaviors allowing for prestige to be gained for members of populations that were sometimes not available for non-members. The female captives were not assimilated into daily life of the Cahokian society, but were instead killed and interred in mass graves within Mound 72 in a fairly



short period of time after they were taken as captives. This is evidenced by several facts, including that these females were young, they did not suffer years of captivity, and they maintained distinct diets. Moreover, there is no evidence that these females developed the prevalent infectious diseases that were present at Cahokia and sites in its hinterlands. Ultimately, the imposed social position as captive is supported by the mortuary treatment of these females and by the bioarchaeological data.

This chapter is especially important in continuing discussions of non-economic models of status and position, and includes a critique of how the discussions about archaeological sites that are multi-ethnic or otherwise composed of various populations are currently constructed. Although individuals or groups may experience changed conditions if they move (willingly or not) into new locations they may not obtain access to all the positions held by these populations. Constructive processes of group level identities shed some much needed light in these fluid and shifting realities. However, the difference in position and authority between Cahokians and their captives also allows us to reach into the concepts of imposition, particularly since the Cahokians were performing the lethal rituals and burials that included these said captives. By understanding these imposed positions, the archaeological interpretations move beyond models that squeeze non-members into the Cahokian social structure.

Chapter seven explores the important topic of status interpretations from mortuary contexts. Especially in discussions that involve the exploration of secular and mythic motifs associated with the mortuary behaviors, these burial contexts require our utmost attention. I strongly reject taking an economic approach by assuming ranked status distinctions in mortuary contexts based on the associated grave goods, and I additionally

reject interpretations that view mortuary contexts as mirrored reflections of roles, positions, and statuses held in life. These relationships are not as straightforward as these models once suggested. Specifically for Mound 72, where the relationships between the burial program and status have long been relied upon, recent interpretations of this context as a mythic tableau demonstrate that the economic interpretations fall short with the majority of burials associated with non-local, or distinctive Cahokians. Repeated reliance on economic interpretations of prehistoric burials further confuse the interpretations of these contexts. For instance, captive individuals may incorrectly be interpreted as low status, when status in the case of captives is more often than not unknown and not decipherable in these burial contexts.

Chapter eight explores these connections in the discussion using modern terminology to explain past behaviors. These connections are not always as straightforward and easy as they perhaps should be. My goal is to identify the behavior, not to utilize a legalistic focus and decide culpability and blame. Instead of using these definitions to classify these actions, we allow even in the modern contexts, current politics to influence these characterizations of both modern and past events. This reduces the ability of the archaeologists to classify violent behaviors that include actions targeting the success of populations living in the past, mostly because we cannot demonstrate individual level intent, nor are there written accounts available to clearly demonstrate the systematic actions of eradication can be embedded in minds and actions of those participating in cultural activities of exclusion. Worse, current understandings of these behaviors limit the roles in which humanitarian and relief efforts can play in the mitigation of these actions. As an international community we tend to use very strict

definitions of bounded populations, and for some the categorizations of protected populations are limited to only populations with a shared biology, which is at the expense of many identifiable populations.

Additionally, in chapter eight I have included a discussion of the standardized comparison that is often made to the Nazi destruction of non-desirable populations during their control of Germany. Here the highly industrialized actions are recorded in writings and images that detail the Nazi-led destruction of multiple populations in Europe. These recordings continue to shape and skew thoughts of genocidal actions based on faulty concepts of scale, population identification, and the systematic orchestration of these events. The question then shifts to how anthropologists and the public alike are to identify these behaviors in current or past contexts without needing to account for potential variances in scale, or in the differences in the performance (i.e., the enactment) of these behaviors that do not compare to the industrial example. Here I present: more recent theoretical concepts of the constructive processes of population and collective identities that move the discussion from biological constructions; a deconstructed interpretation of what systematic behavior extends to (i.e., socially-sanctioned behaviors that go beyond written plans); and I present cases of populations that have been identified and targeted for genocidal violence that are overlooked by many, as they do not fit the biological-model of protected populations.

**--CHAPTER TWO--**

**VIOLENCE, PEACEMAKING, AND RELATING MODERN EXAMPLES TO  
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PAST**

In the wake of current discourse regarding publicly-sanctioned acts of violence, its terminology, and the focus on ethnically motivated violence, deeper examination of these events is required. Where should the lines be drawn between interpersonal violence, massacres, warfare and genocide? Are these long-term processes that can be detected and monitored as advocacy groups like *Genocide Watch* strive to detect and potentially quell? Scholars are recognizing and discussing these events more often, and are determined not to vilify nor romanticize the populations involved, as has sometimes resulted from these studies. The goal of these studies is to understand the range and longevity of violent actions. Archaeologically, questions of specific motivations of individual events are often unattainable, but we sometimes see glimmers of the factors that could lead to intensification of these interactions. We can also identify the material remains and changes in settlements, dietary fluctuations, changes in material tools that correlate to peacemaking and warfare endeavors. Only by exploring specific, formerly taboo questions of the past, can we hope to see the long term processes involved in these often tenuous relationships.

As David Dye (2009:3) appropriately notes, “All human groups have the potential for violence, but they also have the potential for ameliorating violent acts through a variety of domestic, political, religious, and social mechanisms.” We should not ignore the evidence of peacemaking activities when discussing violence, but these actions are

sometime more difficult to recognize as the material remains can be ambiguous in form. For example, the calumet pipe ranged in style, acceptable use, and the symbolic meanings of the pipe varied (Figure 2.1). Furthermore, the materials used to distinguish individual pipes were often stylized with non-durable materials including feathers and wood that often do not survive for archaeological discovery. In other words, not all archaeological pipes are “peace pipes.” A lack of bodies riddled with evidence of painful encounters does not necessarily mean that there were no violent activities. Perhaps these bodies did not leave physical indications, or the victims of these actions were buried off-site, or were simply not identified. However, the violence included in this study is for the most part visible. In the Cahokia case study, the violence toward various groups of captives is apparent; although the mode of death may be obscure.



Figure 2.1 Catlinite calumet pipe. Courtesy, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (Cat. No. 196753.000). Photo by NMAI Photo Services Staff. Modified by the author.

Furthermore, given the time that it takes to bury the dead, even in the form of a mass grave, if the perpetrators were not intending to make use of the nearby space, there

may be little motivation to dispose of the defeated in any particular manner. It may even be a strategically advantageous solution to leave victims exposed on the surface to intimidate enemies. This is a known behavior in both modern and ancient cases. Images of decomposing human remains from schoolhouses, in the streets, practically anywhere and everywhere fill newspapers and magazines following some of the modern events, such as the 1994 Rwandan genocide, and the crisis that erupted into violence in 2003 in Darfur. Regardless of the ongoing discussions about which events to be termed as genocide versus calling them something else, like “mass killing event,” or “ethnic war,” what we can see is how the bodies are treated in similar and rather indistinguishable patterns in each of these events.

Moreover, history reminds us time and again that victims are not perpetually victimized and that victims can sometimes become perpetrators of similar, or even the same actions that caused them to become victims. Some of these responses of the victims are directly and clearly coerced. Other victims may otherwise fall into positions where they feel forced to commit these actions out of their own fears of the potential repercussions they could ensue if they did not participate (Levi 1988; Malkki 1995; Mamdani 2001). At the same time, others may not feel coerced and participate willingly (Goldhagen 1997). In Mahmood Mamdani's (2001) writings about cycles of violence, he identified a pattern whereby those who have been historically victimized become hypersensitive and potentially violent as a post-traumatic response. That is, some victims enact violence at the slightest hint of danger, or aggression by their past oppressors, but are doing so as a direct response to their own experiences in past events. Looking more closely at this idea, it is reasonable to apply the same concept to those we recognize as

perpetrators. In other words, it must be remembered that we are speaking of human-beings, not monsters. Even when they participate in violent acts, these are wholly human actions (albeit inhumane), and I refuse to give the individuals performing these acts more power by bolstering these behaviors as non-human. The performances of these entirely human actions cause acts of violence to become difficult to situate, because they are missed or mis-recognized (Bourdieu 1990; Geertz 1995). This is especially pertinent when we consider that many of these actions were performed in situations where there were other options, some that may have been so much as diplomatic. In other words, violence is not a final straw in a line of failed relationships, but can also be a prominent behavioral choice by some. These seemingly cruel actions are only part of the situation, and likely co-occurred with actions of peace in complimentary and even simultaneous moments of great violence. Reconstruction of these exact moments are for the most part impossible, but conceptually should frame interpretations. Without this frame it is too easy to essentialize, and then we miss the point. As Liisa Malkki notes (1995:88), “Essentialist projects to determine the 'objective' truth or falsity of these complex or important questions concerning, precisely, their power as cultural constructs inextricably encoded in other domains of social practice, and capable of being put to many uses. One use, or effect, of such maps is to construct and imagine ethnic difference.” Clearly, cultural conceptions of ethnicity are not even available to the living, much less identifiable from the remains of populations.

Further, behaviors aimed at creating shared identities and experiences, can strengthen the bonds between those in similar social positions through the formation of solidarities (Durkheim 1984). The familiar adage “nothing brings people closer than a

common enemy” also holds true in even the direst and most dangerous of situations, and can encourage ethnogenesis processes. As groups and individuals work to separate themselves from others, the bonds between these individuals are sometimes strengthened. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Phillipe Bourgois (2004:14) point out, the “Extreme forms of 'us' versus 'them' can result in a social self-identity predicated on a stigmatized, devalued notion of the other as the enemy.” Clearly, as populations define their identities in contrast to other populations (i.e., “us versus them”), their identities can become so deeply engrained that they devalue those in contrast. Not all ethnic identities are constructed with such strong insider versus outsider comparisons, but those that are can sometimes allow for devaluation and even dehumanization ideologies to flourish (Savage 2006). When this occurs, acts of violence toward other populations may shift into genocidal situations, where populations thereby seek the destruction of these *othered* groups.

Perceptions of shared group identities are often strengthened by working together to overcome obstacles and adversity (Turner 1969; Van Gennep 1960). Writing about the formation of ethnic identities among some indigenous Native American populations in the southeast during the European contact period, Alan Galloway (2002) identifies the fluidity of these identity formations apparent during colonialism.

Ethnicity has never been a monolithic, static source of identity grounded in biology and culture. It is a matter of political identity. The layered identities of Indians have parallels with the layered identities of Scotland, where clan and manor were akin to Indian clan and town. Scots know that they were Scottish only when faced with the English, who themselves were a conglomeration of Anglos, Saxons, Normans, and others. The Quapaw, Tourima, Tongigua, and Sitteoui became Arkansas only when they faced outside enemies like the Osage and Chickasaw. (Galloway 2002:113)

The identification of victims therefore can fall back upon itself at first glance. The



shifting of identities does not remove the circumstances, nor does it reduce the actions that forged these contingent social relationships. To clarify, when confronted with common goals, individuals and populations will sometimes shift their relationships to accommodate their new or pressing circumstances, consequently shifting the contingent social relationships and understandings. The fluid subjectivity (Meyer 2000) of these identities has become more apparent in recent literature in ethnographic situations, particularly in discussions regarding the individual-level, and provides a framework that can be applied in archaeological studies. For archaeologists, this frame of fluid subjectivity may be better suited to answer group level identity and identification questions, as discussed below.

The multitude of faceted or situational identities of an individual cannot be reconstructed fully from archaeological investigations, because they are not static, and individuals are composed of shifting, situational identities. However, we can sometimes gain insight through the interpretation of imposed or other symbolically important data to infer how others perceived these individuals. These imposed identities are not complete, but they are useful. For instance, in burials, these imposed identities are not meant to represent exactly who a person was while living, nor are they meant to incorporate each and every role/position or status an individual experienced in life. Rather, the symbols discovered by archaeologists are more often than not focused on those who are performing the burial activities (Pearson 1993). These symbols are embedded with meanings, some showing their respect (or lack thereof), and some can incorporate more idealized personalized features. The sometimes individualized symbols should not be confused with personhood, which has a largely self-defined component. Archaeologists

cannot reconstruct these instances of self-identification, nor can we answer specifics about an individual's identity from the archaeological setting without first hand accounts of and even from the individual. Even with those first-hand accounts, we would still only have access to part of the story, part of the identity. However, we should not abandon ideas of identity all together. It is instructive to remember that identity is a formative process that is based not just on the self-identification, but also through the interpretations of others, and that the interactions between the self and others are sometimes visible in the identities we impose.

The ethnic fluidity that Alan Galloway (2002) writes about is essential for archaeologists to revisit, as we define and characterize sites by their cultural affiliation. We do this by assigning ethnic ownership to the artifacts and structures we encounter. At “multi-ethnic” sites these data then are complicated by a mixture of artifact types that fall under different population categories, with this complication being particularly apparent in the Late Woodland and Mississippian periods (Strezewski 2006). Population distinctions in these periods may have fuzzier borders, as these dynamic boundaries are fluid; they shift as relationships shift. Before I leap off the theoretical cliff, I will take a step back and note that even given this perspective of contingent boundedness, that I too use some boundaries in defining populations as well as behaviors. As researchers exploring past cultures we need some fluid boundaries to contain our thoughts of where, when, and who we are writing about. I do not think that we should avoid these topics because we are afraid that fuzzy, shifting boundaries may be difficult to explain completely on an individual level. We need to recognize they exist, then describe them, and be ready to adjust our use of boundaries with the emergence of new data.

In a similar vein, identification of individual identity and personhood should not be the research goal in mortuary analysis, as it is usually unattainable. Personhood and individualized identities are often not the point of burial behaviors, and therefore are not likely to be expressed in obvious ways. There can be exceptions, but these are often restricted to historical figures, in which the identity of the individual is clear and can be further supported by written accounts. Even in circumstances where past cultures may have emphasized personhood, the supporting evidence is often “lost” when dealing with the prehistoric. This point is further discussed below, but I want to make clear that this is not where my thoughts are leading.

In both the modern and archaeological contexts it is vital to discuss the changing theoretical views on violence. I will demonstrate why the literature of violence, its forms, functions, and meanings are essential for archaeologists to be knowledgeable and understand and in some cases incorporate these works as frames for approaching this difficult topic. My goal is not to inform any direct-historical approach, and in fact I have chosen examples from a wide range of events to reduce the possibility of creating any unintended history for any population. Instead, I am interested in the overall processes that create these assemblages associated with violent actions, and I aim to better describe these frequently muddled behaviors. Also, I am interested in exploring the range of violence that we can identify and reconstruct in the context of the ancient past. I do not view these actions as modern, but think that we have misinterpreted them at times.

### **Anthropological Theories of Violent Acts**

Acts of physically visible social violence have been examined using a variety of

perspectives and evidence. Cultural, biological, and environmental explanations delve into these tough research questions, each providing enriching bodies of data. However, none of these groups of theories adequately explain how and why violent events emerge, just that they do, and that these events result from vastly differing circumstances. The gaps in theoretic explanations are present because violent actions are enacted for widely different and often overlapping reasons. That being said, it is admittedly tempting to seek explanations that would further our understandings about the ultimate causes of tumultuous circumstances. For the purposes of this chapter, I will quiet this urge in lieu of presenting these perspectives as fairly as I am able; noting the benefits of knowing such information, as well as some of the deficiencies when applied to the Cahokia case example.

In anthropology, there has been a long tradition of explaining violence in a rather dichotomous fashion. Much is written on warring events, including raiding, and warfare, with less of a focus on strategies of peace. In other words, many anthropological theories are focused on events, at least more so than they are inclusive of ideas of process or contingent social relationships. This is understandable, as the results of events are often more easily recognized, particularly when we delve into the distant past. However, I am not convinced that event based models can accommodate these complex situations on their own. Namely, they cannot adequately handle shifts in power and the fluid positionality of individuals and groups that we can see in modern events. These factors were no doubt active in the past and as with difficulties in assigning these directly, I discourage others from trying to discern each and every shift; this level of detail is not only likely an impossibility for reconstruction, but for practical purposes it would render

these data incomparable, as they would continue to shift and change in life. This will be more fully articulated below when my discussion is specifically focused on connecting modern and past behaviors.

Violent acts are at times written off as part of the progressive development of humans in a cultural evolution stance. These theories relate increases in violence to concepts of cultural evolution, as defined based on the socio-political organization of populations (Carneiro 1970). The advent of history also had the unintended effect of increasing the world's awareness of specific events, and often leads us to misrepresent the ancient past as a peaceful haven. These false notions of the world getting more violent and life becoming more difficult as populations continue to grow and interact in sometimes negative ways may not be a fair assessment of our past. Our ancestors were not forced to get along in order to battle the terrible circumstance of being born before history, nor were they constantly engaged in fighting against beasts in nature. They lived as we do in regards to these interactions—negotiating their social circumstances that were sometimes contradictory and always complex.

### *Biological Models*

Some of the earliest anthropological research on these behaviors favored biological explanations, including theories of an innate psychological disposition (Leach 1965) to explain these events as part of our shared animalistic ancestry. In these situations, humans are not seen as less responsible for their actions, only that violence is rooted in our biological drives to survive (i.e., niche competition). These relationships are heightened when individuals or groups are competing for lands and various resources,

such as water, food, and even people. Populations and individuals are described as violent because of their biological imperative to compete with other species, as well as among each other. Humans tend to compete with those populations that they recognize as distinct from their own, although these distinctions do not need to be biological, and often are derived from cultural differences.

Although I have placed Edmund Leach's theory of innate psychological disposition under the biological heading, the thrust of Leach's own theories of ethnogenesis, in his words the creation of "cultural barriers," are clearly rooted in cultural constructions of ethnic identity. Leach offers cultural models and understandings of ethnicity as culturally constructed. Yet in his works, he views violent behaviors as primarily driven by our biological need to survive. To Leach, culture is used to both form a population who share beliefs, and also to distinguish those who take different perspectives. Perceived differences in populations can sometimes lead to incredible violence and bloodshed, while in other situations are more peacefully mediated. In other words, although there are barriers constructed between competing populations, we should not think of these boundaries as static, nor should the resultant relationships be viewed as solely biologically driven. Humans have just as much of a propensity for peace as they do for violence.

As Edmund Leach is famously quoted "The violence in the world comes about because we human beings are forever creating barriers between men who are like us and men who are not like us." These barriers are real, despite current recognition that they are cultural constructions. We can refer to these socially constructed barriers on many levels; cultures, ethnicities, race, clan, village, *et cetera*. Significantly, people can and do

recognize these differences and use them to explain and justify their relationships with people seen as different. However, this recognition is not always accurate, or rather it **is** based on the interpretation of culturally (not biologically) constructed traits, resulting more in a mis-recognition of biological population distinction. Lissa Malkki's (1995:87-88) research on the mythico-history and identity formation at Hutu refugee camps highlights the difficulties in recognizing individuals from populations envisioned as separate. The biological relationships between Tutsi and Hutu in Rwanda and Burundi were often blurred as intermarriage between these populations occurred in various circumstances and with fluctuating frequency. The result was that individuals were evaluated based on stereotypical physical traits, and behaviors during various massacre/genocide events. These categorizations, even more accurately called racializations, of Hutu and Tutsi traits were reified by European colonial governments during 1900-1962. The complexity of the biological and social identity constructions is addressed in more detail in later chapters, but suffice it to say that barriers between these populations are not always clearly defined.

Furthermore, modern violent actions are frequently enacted and performed on individuals and groups who are closely related biologically. Therefore, when looking into the past we cannot rely on the assumption that there will be biological distinctions. Interestingly, the Mound 72 Cahokia example contains both individuals who were biologically related and those who were distant who were included into these lethal rituals in different ways. Those who were biologically more similar to their captors (Cohen 1974) were interacted on a more visibly violent level, as they were killed by bludgeoning at the mound location.

### *Cultural Models*

Other recent interpretations of violence have examined more of the social causes, such as social and psychological distancing (Hinton 1996), as a continuum of power that ranges from social pressure and control to physical acts of violence on the bodies of individuals (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004) and the experiential aspects of acts of violence (Nordstrom and Martin 1992; Riches 1986). These culturally motivated theories point to the issues of social complexity as well as call for the in-depth study of individual contexts. These theories, notably those of social distancing and models of fluid enactments of violence, can be used as intellectual frames in past actions. This does not mean that the archaeologist can pinpoint an event on any continuum, but it importantly breaks from prevailing ideas of strictly bounded violence categories. There are boundaries, just not static ones. These boundaries are only recognizable after careful recontextualization, and even then these are not always discrete.

In taking a contextual and symbolic approach toward the violent events in the archaeological record, discussions of symbolic violence (Bourdieu 1990) become indispensable. For example, the threat of violence could reduce the cases of violent outbreaks though the tensions negotiated between or with present populations. Moreover, public displays of violence may be used to strategically assert authority and power without having to include many individuals as victims, which is likely in the case of the public killing or executions of non-local Cahokians. Socially imposed threats of violence can discourage people from involving themselves in social causes that could arise in volatile settings, such as a polarized political meeting. For the Cahokians, there is little chance that archaeologists will discover evidence that would undeniably demonstrate that



Cahokians in power positions gained or solidified their positions through a discourse of violence, but the lack of any evidence of retaliation following the killing of over 118 females may point to these social relations. The relationship between threats of violence and its actualization is difficult to reconstruct in societies that did not leave written records; basically we are left with just the evidence of trauma from violent actions, and the assumption that there were associated threats. However, the spatial location of the activities, namely the killing of many various groups of individuals at Mound 72, would not have gone unnoticed. I interpret the location and grandeur of these events as strong support for a public performance or set of performances that involved the use of differential performances of the positions of power. This power extended beyond the level of the individual and included non-local power positioning that was used to gain captives. Further, the public location and visibility of these performances support ideas of symbolic violence that extended beyond these killing events. These were not hidden occurrences.

### *Evolutionary Models*

Cultural evolution and evolutionary biology models offer polarized theories of non-state violence. There are two prevailing opinions in these studies. In the first, indigenous populations are portrayed as cultures with “lesser” or more “primitive” beliefs (as they have been interpreted within the frame of Western beliefs) that are more inclined to resort to violence and warring as they were seen as lacking the social milieu and cultural tools needed to reach more diplomatic conclusions. The second perspective is that these so-called “primitive” cultures are incapable of committing acts of violence and

cruelty prior to encounters with Europeans (Blick 1988). In other words, they are pristine until they are corrupted by outsiders. My issue with these theories is not so much about a complete rejection of the adaptive qualities of culture, but more that diversity and flexibility of cultural adaptations are invariably reduced in these trajectory models.

Evolutionary biologist, Napoleon Chagnon's infamous account of the Yanomamö in *The Fierce People* (1968) demonstrates the damaging image that an essentialist bias in dealing with issues of peacemaking and violence can produce. Here Chagnon describes the warring practices of the Yanomamö as intrinsically linked to their survival as a population, as there are some detectable increases in fertility linked to warfare. Men do not just defeat enemies during these events, but they can additionally gain captive females and children that can be used as wives, slaves, or victims in vengeful killings; therefore, Chagnon (1968, 2000) identifies these behaviors with the adaptive principles of evolutionary biology. There is a double standard present that becomes particularly apparent when these accounts come from state level societies that not only have histories in violent expansions, but also strive to increase their weaponry and maintain their armed forces. Rates of violence can distinguish forms of behavior, but should not be used to create an essentialized identity. The Yanomamö were practicing endemic raiding. These events occurred with high frequency, but low intensity (usually keeping the number of killed at a minimum). As noted by Chagnon (1968), the village he was fielding in participated in raid events each month. He witnessed 25 raids in a 15 month period that culminated with a total of 10 deaths (five percent of the village).

Similar to the evolutionary biology models, the cultural evolutionary models focus on interpreted difference in the complexity of populations. Robert Carneiro (1970)

discusses the development of socially complex states as directly related to population pressures and warfare. He then describes how the social and natural environment drives competition causing populations to aggregate. This aggregation then requires the populations to develop new strategies and levels of complexity that had not been previously obtained. Hence the violent interactions cause populations to develop more complex societies to accommodate these increases in population size. These arguments are often tied to the biological models of niche competition to explain the initial violent behavior, but problematically create relationships between population size, complexity, and type of violence. Furthermore, they create a linear progression in these relationships that limits interpretations of these behaviors.

Evolutionary interpretations of violence can be even more problematic inasmuch that they not only value familiar beliefs about cultural development, but they also rely on using technological advances as a proxy for social advances. The lack of permanent sites among nomadic populations also may inflate the accounts due to the visibility of violent interactions in more sedentary populations. Without seasonal or permanent settlements, individuals are hard enough to find archaeologically, much less those who were killed during a personal or even society level event. This does not mean that they did not exist, indeed they did, and archaeologists have found individuals who experienced violent interactions in isolated situations—these are just rare examples and should be approached with theoretical caution. Lastly, cultural evolution models often fail to adequately explain how, in very similar circumstances, some populations will use more or less diplomatic versus warring strategies.

### *Environmental Models*

The often polarized theoretical views in anthropology lead us to search more deeply for our answers, as these are never easily explained events. For instance, reduced productivity of subsistence crops has been explored as partially responsible for the French Revolution in 1789 (Fagan 2000). The low productivity and resultant shortage of grains is blamed as an incendiary factor to the violence that erupted with great fervor throughout the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In a related situation, the apparent excess of food stuffs in storage facilities may have heightened warfare in the Southeastern part of the United States following the introduction of corn. David Dye (2009:177) relates the heightened productivity of food resources to increases in warfare. He notes that the aggregated surplus may be easier to obtain through raiding events compared to growing and tending fields. There are likely other correlative factors, such as the amount of defensive features at a site, as well as the overall size of the population that would need to be addressed in any model of warfare based on storage raiding. The most important feature that emerges from the two above situations is that there is never a simple relationship between deficit and violence, nor surplus and violence.

Currently, we are seeing the incorporation of more ecologically and environmentally motivated discussions for violent interactions. Recent archaeological studies often rely on arguments that explore the availability of loosely defined essential resources, land-use rights (Lekson 2002; Milner et al. 1991; Zimmerman and Bradley 1986, 1993), or other ecological motivators like a natural disaster and severe drought (Dye 2009:137, 153; Ember and Ember 1992) to explain these interactions. For instance, Carol and Marvin Ember (1992) state that frequent war is correlated with both a fear of

unpredictable natural disasters and a deep-seated fear of outsiders. These arguments tend to reduce human behaviors to reactions based on outside changes and conditions, and are sometimes reminiscent of past environmental scholarship that portrays humans as pawns to climate fluctuation. As a whole, there is no denying the great influence that our environments factor into our adaptability, and even localized (or more widely spread) disasters factor into social relationships, but these are never simple and never one-sided. One needs to simply recall the horrific events following the January 12, 2010 earthquake in Haiti. Here, stories of individuals being beaten and killed in the streets were countered with humanitarian and aid efforts. Some individuals were not only victims of the natural disaster, but they were also victims of the social responses that followed. Reactions to natural and social events are always complex, and I think that our interpretations of past events need to incorporate these details that are sometimes at odds with each other. This flexibility in interpretation does not simply apply to regional settings, and contradictions can be viewed in singular burial contexts as well. For instance, some of the most elaborate Mississippian period burials are interred alongside burials with little to no elaboration, yet these are often ignored except in relation to the seemingly elite burials. This idea of contradictions in burial and theories of mortuary status are recognized and heavily included in the discussion of status interpretations in chapter six.

The current focus on environmental studies in anthropology has led to the trend in archaeological exploration of warfare to frequently attribute the primary cause of acts of violence to environmental explanations of resource stress and/or land productivity. In other words, these theories are often focused on finding the ecological smoking gun, like a long drought period to explain violent interactions (Dye 2009:153). While natural

disasters—including environmental changes—may be severe in cases, they do not fully explain these actions. Evidence indicating that violent actions occur quite often, without the presence of an ecological catastrophe; demonstrate that the environment is not the sole cause of these behaviors. In some cases in the American Southwest, the predictability of ecological productivity may intensify the social interactions (Lekson 2002), but it should not be interpreted as the sole or main causal factor. Otherwise human behavior would be entirely subject to the fluctuations in weather patterns. This is not to say that the environment has no impact, only that it should not be used in a deterministic manner in and of itself.

In general, environmental theories are problematic for several reasons beyond their frequent lack of agency. They are too often focused on longer term drought conditions that are predictable (Lekson 2002), as opposed to shorter term fluctuations that were not as predictable and therefore could be more devastating. Similarly, they ignore unpredictably wet conditions as dangerous to crops and human life. Secondly, they do not sufficiently explain why specific populations or individuals are targeted during periods of ecological stress. Lastly, current environmental theories often ignore, or cannot distinguish the possible symbolic aspects of these acts. In other words, violence occurs for a variety of reasons and using environmental stress as the default explanation, even in cases where nutritional stress is evident, does not allow for the complexity of these societal tensions to emerge in their reconstruction. For instance, Mary Lucas Powell (1991) found that the health status of individuals was often influenced by their age in the Mississippian Southeast. She found that at Moundville, adolescents were more likely to experience disruptions in diets than adults, despite the location of Moundville in a fertile

and resource rich environment. As people aged, they gain access to more nutritionally complete diets. To me, this could indicate that the population at Moundville was age-graded and likely had a system of elders; younger cohorts were restricted from certain foods solely based on their age.

This age-grade that divides younger and elder cohorts is consistent with the accounts that were later recorded, as well as with the oral traditions. In Paul Radin's (1948) recording of the Winnebago Hero cycle, an elder structure is visibly present in several ways. First, following the recovery of Red-Horn and Turtle's bones from the Beneath World, the elders, Red-Horn and Turtle, pass on their bundles to their nephews. Here the elders were clearly no longer able to compete to win at high-stakes games, and could not escape the underworld by themselves. Second, the elders were those who participated in the events prior to the younger cohort's involvement. Third, warrior prowess and other attributes of these warriors were passed on to the younger cohort with the material goods, the bundles. There is a clear transference of power, knowledge, and leadership that is demonstrated by this action.

Furthermore, in the Southeast the environmental explanations for these violent actions have been countered multiple times, including in Jon Gibson's (1974) study of Southeastern warfare. Gibson (1974) presents an alternative model of warfare activities as a prestige-gaining strategy. This model, although hugely important in explaining much of the motivations behind continuing warfare practices, does not offer an entirely suitable explanation for the Cahokia example, as is discussed at length throughout this dissertation. However, as George Lankford (1984) describes, the prestige-model does offer insight into why violent interactions were cultivated in some populations, and were

not only considered important, but desirable. Warfare allowed young males to become *men*, as they proved their honor and worth to the community. Although it is clear that warfare can be used in various socially important ways, what also needs to be made clear is that there are many forms, reasons for, and even breaches of conduct that societies define in these conflicts.

### **Exploring Modern Examples in Archaeological Research**

It is instructive to use modern examples of warfare and peacemaking strategies when exploring topics of violence in the past. The analogies made should not be read as identical to what is found archaeologically, because we are only able to reconstruct potential behaviors through the patterned remnants of these activities. However, the exploration and use of the modern examples of violence should not be ignored. The deconstruction and documentation of recent events allow archaeologists to pursue deeper analyses into the behaviors that can reveal the processes of ethnogenesis and further demonstrate the different ways in which populations participated in violent actions that are frequently not revealed through solely archaeological means. These comparisons encourage and allow archaeologists to challenge problems related to scale, intent, and the mechanisms in which individuals and groups are identified and targeted for victimization. These concepts can be applied to the past.

For this dissertation research, I explored examples from Burundi, Rwanda, the Holocaust, the 1915 exile of Armenians, the destruction of Native American groups through European colonial events, and on a very limited scale, the violence in Cambodia and East Timor. Although I found similarities in several of these examples to what I had



interpreted from Cahokia's Mound 72 assemblage, most of what I discovered in the literature were polarized theories that relied on concepts of not just ethnic dissonance but the assumption that the violent actions occurred between biologically distinguished populations. For instance, the Cambodian Killing Fields that were created between 1975-1979, is still being contested in terms of the number of killings based on the methods of killing (i.e., the direct killing of 200,000 individuals versus the indirect causes like starvation, which resulted in the deaths of nearly 2.3 million more people). This reduces the classification of these events as genocide in the minds of some. Further complicating the categorization of these events as genocide, are the focuses used by the Khmer Rouge on the politics and urban-rural residence status of individuals targeted for destruction. As such, the population destruction in Cambodia is not included by some in definitions of genocide (Hinton 1998; Jones 2006). This misclassification of these events is the result of two major interpretive issues that essentially share the same root. First, because of the lack of a singularly targeted biological population, this caused some confusion. The Cambodian destruction is not simply confined to racist ideologies against a single population, but like the purging effort used by the Nazis in Germany in which, multiple populations were targeted for destruction. Second, the focus on political groups (i.e., non-biological populations) is a population type that has historically been excluded from genocide protection (Jones 2006:321-322). Part of the debate is the idea that ethnic minorities (assumed as strictly bounded biological populations) were not being actively targeted and killed, despite the widespread violence that crossed gender and age categories within a particular ethnic group. Here, as well as in many cases of modern, large scale violence, the definitions of the groups overlap, which complicates the

interpretations that often seek single groups. Even as people witness the horror and destruction, they are limited in how they can classify these events (Kakar 1995). This is compounded further, in cases where several populations, as defined based on ethnic or other constructions are included in the target group. Here it is important to remember that more than one group can be targeted simultaneously for expulsion and destruction. For instance, the Nazi destruction in Europe included the targeted removal of non-Aryans: Jewish people, Polish people, Gypsies, homosexuals, handicapped, and the list goes on of all who were actively persecuted (Jones 2006).

Mound 72 contained the remains of both local and non-locals who were differentially killed and interred. Very quickly, it was clear that the most relevant examples of localized identities could be defined from the fluid conceptions of ethnic identity and otherness, as well as through the construction of *mythico-histories* as described by Liisa Malkki (1995). Localize identities were evident through the inferred construction of identity by the Khmer Rouge (Jones 2006:190-192). These concepts were especially pertinent because they challenge the ideas of the biological and static nature of ethnicity that sometimes erroneously appear in the bioarchaeological literature (Kakaliouras 2010; Ousley et al. 2009; Sparks and Jantz 2003) as biological distinctions rather than social constructions.

Though I have explored and included literature from these modern events, this project is ultimately focused on the Mississippian Period in the Southeast and Midwest United States. The use of modern cases of violence helped me to better understand ethnic identify formations that are altered by modern events. In other words, although the modern examples should not be used as directly explanatory of the ancient contexts, they

help identify underlying principles of identification, tagging (marking as distinctive), and demonstrate how populations react to some violent events by forming shared identities, as well as distancing themselves from others who may relate to them in certain respects.

Of importance, while familiarizing myself with this literature, one of the most notable discrepancies that I found in the initial stages of comparing modern and archaeological instances of warfare was an issue with scope. Here, it appeared that although in modern cases there are attempts to find patterns connecting events at several locations in roughly the same time frame, the archaeological collapse of time severely limited these connections. The issue is problematic for both modern and archaeological cases of violence, where trends and patterns in events need time to develop into identifiable behaviors. However, modern cases tend to include records of isolated events that are later recognized and included. The archaeological collapse of time, as well as the imposition of site boundaries, although practical for funding and short-term feasibility, inhibits our understanding of inter and intra-population dynamics by muting these connections. Perhaps this issue can be rectified in studies that are able to adjust the scope by tying the local and regional dynamics into a mosaic. In other words, although each small piece (i.e., events and individual experiences) are important, they should not be viewed as separate from the larger picture.

An additional consideration is that many times it is difficult for archaeologists to incorporate ideas of the fluidity of scope and scale in reconstructions of social events. Therefore, when working to reconstruct, many aim at using comparative site methods in a region. This is the best way for us to develop our regional mosaics of cultures. However, even though many are using these regional approaches, when it comes to violent acts

there is a tendency for archaeologists to discuss many of these as isolated occurrences. Again, like the mosaic pieces, behavioral events frequently appear as the individually isolated fragmented tiles appear, as an unrelated and differential array of broken pieces of tile. It is therefore necessary to order and arrange these phenomena into tangible patterns.

### **Mass Violence and the Archaeological Record**

Data from archaeological studies of warfare provide researchers with the material remains of past violent events, but to make sense of these we must try to understand their cultural contexts as fully as possible, which includes understanding the dynamic construction of ethnic identities. Although in select contexts individual identities or personhood may be exposed (Gillespie 2001; Koff 2004), this is not a goal in my research. I think that individual identities and concepts of personhood are not easily defined even in current contexts and are much less available for archaeological reconstructions of the past. For instance, shifts in individual identities are often only known to the individual who has experienced that shift, and can potentially extend into the knowledge of other individuals in various situations, but the extent of this knowledge is limited. For both ethnological and archaeological reconstructions there is a glossing, data are excluded, others are lost. This is okay, and should not prevent researchers from asking these questions of identity as long as they are working at an appropriate scope for their project. The comparative use of the archaeological record in tandem with historic accounts, as well as with an understanding of the performance of communal violence and the construction of population identity, allow us to reconstruct some of the processes that were likely involved in creating specific group identities through the enactment of violent

and peaceful interactions. This line of research helps to expose the merits and complications of interpreting acts of violence from archaeological remains, and discourages the pornographic portrayals of violence (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004) that are often an unintended result of over-individualization of victims. Instead, the comparative data should focus more on the patterns between case studies and limit the role(s) of individuals.

### *Informing Archaeological Research with Modern Examples*

In this project, I have been able to examine and test the applicability of modern terms that distinguish acts of violence and apply these to the archaeological past. In doing so, I was also able to explore the complexity of the Mound 72 burial context. Here, several distinct forms of violence occurred, and these victimized individuals were then associated to each other by those who buried them. I was also able to elucidate potential differences in the trends of archaeological cases of genocide, as well as other non-warfare related mass killings, as compared to the modern examples. These differences mostly arise because of the advent of international laws that restrict these behaviors, the rapidly spreading awareness, and responses to these events on an international scale.

Additionally, there are quite a few differences in the interpretations and applications of the categories of violent behaviors across anthropological and other academic disciplines.

There are significant overlaps in all categories of violence, but the frequently converging classifications can be managed by archaeologists who are willing to allow for fuzzy borders. Further, religiously motivated killings were differentially performed with locals and non-locals depending on the contextualized circumstance, and religious

motivations are not mutually exclusive from the secular realm. Take the example of the Taensa sacrifice of twelve or thirteen apparently local individuals following the death of the chief that was recorded by La Source in 1699 and by the French missionary De Montigny (Gallay 2002:101-126). These individuals were retainers who were killed to assist the chief in the afterworld. Their participation in these funerary rites may have provided social status to their surviving kin, if the Taensa used a prestige-gaining strategy similar to the historic period Natchez (Swanton 1911, 1946), which is likely given the related history of these populations. The practice of human sacrifice following the death of leaders greatly disturbed Frenchmen living with the Taensa, and was one of the behaviors that missionaries desired to curtail. After Montigny baptized a “great chief” and gave him a new Christian name, Michel, he made the people vow to stop their sacrificial practices, and not to allow them to occur upon Michel's death.

Subsequently, the Taensa performed temple sacrifices in March of 1700, which was not witnessed by Montigny, but the other Frenchmen who were with him saw the event. The sacrifices were meant to appease the Great Spirit who was clearly angered (evidenced by the destruction of the temple by fire) by the intervention efforts of Montigny who encouraged the people to stop sacrificial practices that would include the death of 12-13 individuals. As noted by Alan Gallay (2002:118), “The Taensa priest blamed Montigny for the fire. By preventing the ritual sacrifices when the chief died, the Taensa had offended the deceased, who then had the temple burned.” The sequence of events leading to the infant sacrifices observed by the French followed a period of illness experienced by many Taensa. In January of 1700 there was an illness spreading rapidly through the population, killing many. Due to the magnitude and rapidity in the spread of

the illness, Montigny convinces the Taensa to allow him to perform baptisms on the dying children. After the performance of the baptisms the Taensa temple burns down (this is in March of 1700). Five children are then immolated with the goal of appeasing spirits angered by Montigny's and others' interference in sacrifice rituals (they had opposed and prevented more sacrifices after the 12-13 individuals who were killed to accompany the chief in death). Further, these accounts indicate that the Frenchmen in the village stopped more infants from being immolated (Gallay 2002: 118). This sacrificial event is reported in several accounts, including: Iberville's Gulf Journals, 129; the journal of Paul Du Ru, 41 that reports that four or five infants were killed; Montigny reported it on Jan 2, 1699, in *Copie d'un lettre*, and says four infants were immolated; and Gravier states that five died in "Journal," 137. In Montigny's description of the March 1700 infant sacrifices, he asserts that parents *happily* sacrificed their children. Perhaps, but this could alternatively be explained as part of the cultural performance, whereby the culturally accepted behavior required a distancing between displays of emotions.

Modern studies of mass violence provide a useful analytical framework for interpreting the mass burials containing victims of violent actions from the past by allowing us to comprehend the inherent complexity and even contradictions that lose their visibility in archaeological contexts. My goal in comparing the archaeological past to more recent cases of violence is not to say that these past events perfectly parallel any modern event, but is to instead explore ideas that archaeologists are locked into that they may be able to ascertain more data than is realized. Namely, the ideas of bounded cultures, ethnicities, and identities have limited much of our understanding of both modern and ancient social relations. Exploring and deconstructing these behaviors that

sometimes intersect may allow us to elucidate the complexity woven into our social dynamics of the past.

Additionally, data gathered from ancient events of mass violence allow modern violence researchers to define a much needed temporal dimension that counters ideas that these events are completely modern (Destexhe 1995; Markusen 1996). In part, the goal of testing the longevity of these violent behaviors motivated this research project. Violent acts that include attempted population eradication likely occurred in the distant past. A major result of using an integrative approach is helping us better understand how mass killing events have transformed over time, and instead of ignoring the ancient events we should strive to view and analyze how these relate to the modern.

Another important result of utilizing recent examples of violent acts is that this allows us to view some of the narratives and explanations surrounding these events in modern times. Using such a large range in narratives has demonstrated the fluidity of identification and victimization. These narratives have also pointed to some of the social dynamics that complicate the archaeological record as these are non-durable, including acts of quiet resistance, whispers of agreement/justification, and the sliding scale of participation. In other words, the modern examples can inform research of the past, and have even changed this researcher's perspective on how different events embody various specific forms of violence.

An interesting, but frightening side of academic reporting and evaluation of violence is that, despite the long history of occurrence of violent events, there are still many disagreements about where specific events fit into definitional categories. These disagreements, while essential to academia can result in the sluggish classification and



exclusions of events based on minutiae or misunderstandings about cultural constructions of identity. These disagreements impede the application of international law and can even extend to the point of denial of the severity of some in the cases of mass killings that should fall under the category of genocide. This is exemplified by the mass killings in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge (Hinton 1996), as well as the mass killings in East Timor (Kleemeyer 1997; Silove 2006). Debates on whether these events would fall under the category of genocide hinge on the adherence to understandings of population distinctions and ethnicity as understood following World War II. The denial of memory and due representation of these acts of violence, solely based on not fitting into narrow and decontextualized legal definitions of these terms is extremely problematic. Even cases of large-scale social violence with the goal of total or partial eradication of a population are sometimes excluded from international legislation because of the strict definitions used to categorize violent events, evident by the delay in the United Nations classification of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, and more recently in Darfur.

Throughout this project, the notion of ethnic identity and identification of population distancing remained forefront in my mind. From researching both ancient and modern data, I found that that current legal understandings fall short in protecting populations from further acts of violence, because they understand dynamic social realities as static and biologically bounded. These incorrect associations not only make modern attempts to capture and prosecute perpetrators extremely difficult, but they are actually facilitating ignorance not only of Rafal Lemkin's definition of genocide, but some examples of how these actions had developed and were enacted in past populations. For instance, during the colonization of the New World, indigenous populations were

decimated by Europeans. Some were ridden ill by disease, others were forced to lose their social identities, and yet others were killed by socially intolerant individuals as well as by those who feared these populations based on incorrect information meant to incite fear (Bradford 2006; Kehoe 2002).

There are large gaps between the requirements of proof for modern examples of these events and what is feasible for archaeologists. For example, when applying Lemkin's definition of genocide, modern court systems require that there is physical proof of planning to eradicate victimized populations (Koff 2004). Interestingly, Lemkin and the 1949 Geneva Conventions note that intent can be inferred. Their flexibility in allowing intent to be inferred was likely because of the stark realization that impunity and denial would factor in genocide trials. Individuals and groups attempt to cover and otherwise disguise their involvement in violent events, especially mass killings but also when charged with lesser crimes. The burden to demonstrate that systematic state-wide objectives that include the elimination of a population, in part or as a whole, is problematic. Moreover, it includes several assumptions that limit its application in ancient contexts. For instance, the idea that genocidal activities are only associated with state-level societies is not only incorrect, but discourages investigations in pre-state and non-state societies. Prehistoric societies did actively engage in behaviors that were destructive toward *othered* groups. They did not always just count coups (feats of bravery and cunning revealed in some intergroup interactions), but also did purposefully attempt to destroy populations (i.e., the massacre of the population who moved into Crow Creek village in South Dakota).

Additionally, when using strict definitions of genocide, people tend to assume that

there will be clear biological population differences. However, many of the distinctions populations make are culturally based, including ideological differences that can motivate violent actions, and may not correspond to any physical distinctions. As a result, the act of genocide may not be perceivable in many archaeological contexts if we remain tied to biological understandings of populations. To exemplify this, let us explore the case of genocide between Tutsi and Hutu in Rwanda and Burundi. Although the roots of their ethnic distinctions are sometimes debated, the historical contexts of Burundi and Rwanda provide an interesting case of the sometimes contradicting relationships between social perceptions of ethnic identity and biology. Here, social distinctions have been so deeply constructed that individuals reify their social positions using identification cards that serve to mark these social distinctions in a material way. It is not unlikely that Tutsi and Hutu intermarry; in fact this appears to be fairly common. However, within this patrilineal society, children acquire their father's status, including that of ethnic identity. This social distinction is made into reality through the use of government issued identification cards (Koff 2004; Malkki 1995).

Although one cannot pinpoint the exact moment in history that Tutsi and Hutu relations intensified, some attribute the Belgium colonial structure which favored the Tutsi minority, and afforded them a higher political status than the Hutu majority. In 1918, the Treaty of Versailles gave Belgium protectorate status over the newly constructed Rwanda-Urundi state. The Belgians saw the minority Tutsi as a superior race to the majority Hutu, and placed them in higher political office positions.

What is striking is that these differences between the Hutu and Tutsi have been so strongly perceived, despite the large inter-group marriage patterns. By practicing

patrilineal descent, the children of these unions are assigned to their patri-line. In other words, if a Hutu woman and Tutsi male have children, they are recognized as Tutsi. Recently described physical differences of Tutsi and Hutu can be found in reports on the outbreaks of violence in Rwanda and Burundi. The Tutsi are described as appearing more European and the Hutu as more stocky and “African.” These descriptions are the artifact of racial classification from the colonial structure, rather than any real physiological difference. This does not mean that Tutsi or Hutu do not exist as real social categories, but demonstrates that these are socially constructed categories, and relate to the social construction of *imagined communities* (Anderson 1991; D'Alisera 2004) of these populations. The communities are constructed on ethnic lines that are then supported by their *mythico-histories*. These imagined communities are real, in the sense that they are perceived as actual social categories by social group members, and are maintained in the cases of Burundi and Rwanda through the institution of identification cards that when presented marked the individuals as being Tutsi, Hutu, or Twa, which were introduced in 1934 by the Belgium authorities. Furthermore, Koff (2004:85) notes that individuals who had more than ten cattle in their possession were also assigned as Tutsi, because the Tutsi were portrayed as derived from a primarily pastoral history and the Hutu were viewed as the agricultural sector of the population.

The endowment of power that the colonial Belgium government gave the Tutsi minority enabled the Tutsi to exert political power and control over the Hutu. The Tutsi were able to limit the social, political, and economic mobility of Hutu individuals, leading to widespread distrust and anger toward this minority who were perceived by some Hutu as descendants from an invasion population (Malkki 1995). In Burundi, the

Tutsi-dominated political rule remained in power from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until 1962, when the Tutsi controlled the government and the military began to kill and push the Hutu majority out of Burundi. Hutu leaders and intellectuals were killed by Tutsi forces, under “le plan Simbananiye” (Lemarchand 1997:323), a plan that targeted the Hutu who held power and knowledge. Following the start of this plan, René Lemarchand (1997) writes about dismantling the myths surrounding the longevity of the history of Hutu-Tutsi conflict. The challenge is to demonstrate that the ethnic tension was constructed in recent, not ancient times. It is important to note that this does not mean that the Hutu and Tutsi were completely enamored with each other prior to the colonial subjugation and hegemonic stratification of Rwanda and Burundi. In reality, the relationships between Hutu and Tutsi oscillated throughout the twentieth century.

Liisa Malkki’s (1995) concept of *mythico-history* is important to discuss at this juncture. What she is aptly referring to is the reconstruction of social relationships through history, both real and imagined. For instance, the complex feelings of resentment and mistreatment of Hutu by Tutsi, and the history of Hutu victimization fed into and intensified their anger toward their Tutsi oppressors. It is not as simple as saying that in Rwanda in 1994, that the Hutu committed genocidal acts toward the Tutsi minority, nor can we simply point to the Tutsi acts of genocide toward Hutu in Burundi—namely attempts to eradicate the educated-- and other individuals who would hold social or political authority and knowledge, and causing a mass exodus of the Hutu into refugee camps in the early 1970s. Instead of playing into the dangerous cycle of blame, the socially constructed population distinctions between the Tutsi and the Hutu sectors of Burundi and Rwanda are what is important. These cultural constructions of reality were

significant in the construction of a mindset for the Hutu who had been historically wronged and abused by the violence of colonialism and by the Tutsis specifically. Their victimization developed into a hypersensitivity (Mamdani 2001), and these reconstructions of the social reality framed the subsequent tragedies (Schieffelin 1985).

In archaeological research, where it is difficult if not impossible to prove motives of population eradication, it may be assumed or feared that the most extreme of these events may not be duly classified. However, even in modern cases it is nearly impossible to prove direct motives of eradication, and it is not the legal requirement. Rather the focus on determining motivation needs to be shifted toward intent (Jones 2006:21-23). Furthermore, the intent to destroy needs to be *inferred* as the 1949 Geneva Convention documents state: that is, when there is little reason to interpret events as accidental or unintended, then the intention of the events are revealed. Again, I find myself asking, “Where are these lines between mass ritual sacrifice, massacre, warfare and genocide? Can these be reconstructed?” The archaeological context of Mound 72 provides a unique opportunity to explore these ideas in a prehistoric case, because of the demographic composition of the foreigners killed at the Mound 72. Cahokians may have targeted the reproductive success of outside populations which is, by definition, a genocidal action. This is discussed in great detail in the later chapters on the Cahokia case study, and in the final chapter on classification of genocide.

#### *Anticipated trends in archaeological cases of mass killings with genocidal tendencies*

Although it is often the case that exceptions to rules arise, it seems likely that there should be trends that will occur in many cases of mass killings that are genocidal in

their intent, and which can be anticipated. Anthropologist, Gregory Stanton founder and president of *Genocide Watch*, has written about the patterns he has identified in genocidal behaviors (Stanton 2004). His goal is to identify the events leading to socially sanctioned killings with additional objectives of early detection and prevention of these behaviors. I have adapted some of his general trends for archaeological research on these events below, and these are continued in chapter eight. My goal in outlining the anticipated trends is to aid in identification of these events in archaeological contexts that are reliant on often severely limited data, while keeping in mind that these are trends, not criteria. Each does not have to be met, although it is likely that in genocidal activities, several of the following will be satisfied.

- Victims are expected from all cohorts (age/sex), or there is specific targeting of children or individuals in their reproductive years, etc.
- Burial treatment of victims is expected to deviate from the typical burial pattern(s). This does not mean that the burials cannot be included in cemeteries used on the site, but that these burials can be distinguished from the norm.
- Burial in mass graves is expected to occur frequently. The episodic mass killing of individuals requires work to bury them, if burial is culturally necessary. In cases where victims are buried by the perpetrators, these burials will not match other burials.
- If the event occurred after international laws of punishment, victims may be interred in clandestine, unmarked graves. Prior to legislation, if the victims are buried, they may even be included in prominent site locations.
- Wounds on victims may display evidence of violence near the time of or as a cause of death. These require careful bioarchaeological analysis to assess the timing of a wound versus other processes resultant from taphonomic or excavation damage.

The above anticipated trends should not be used as a direct checklist to distinguish genocide from other mass killing events; strong evidence and critical evaluation must be

employed throughout the contextualization process. For instance, the massive death event of 912 followers of Jim Jones in 1978 (Chidester 1988; Maaga 1998) serves as a prime example of an event that could be misinterpreted archaeologically as a planned mass killing event. The massive killing event in Jonestown crossed biological age and sex cohorts, and may have included many individuals who were impoverished and who were part of social minorities groups. An additional complication is that over 250 of the victims in the Jim Jones event were children. What marks this event as distinctive from many cases of targeted mass killings, is the inclusion of the leader member as a casualty in this tragedy. Furthermore, the initial goals of this population did not focus on the identification and elimination of these individuals as a collective group that should not live; rather, fear of impending government intervention into the activities of the group lead Jim Jones and his followers to kill those who tried to flee and who did not willingly ingest poisons.

In summation, human history is filled with human interactions that fall into a variety of categories of peacemaking and war; these are not modern reactions to socio-political organization, although they can be informed by these arrangements. These actions do at times intersect and overlap in their associated behaviors, but there are some patterns that can be elucidated, thus marking the fluid boundaries. Throughout this dissertation, I will point toward these boundaries as I see them in the Cahokia context.



## **--CHAPTER THREE--**

### **PREHISTORIC VIOLENCE IN THE NEW WORLD**

There is a long history of acts of violence in the New World that is made manifest through the careful analysis of the wide range of available data from archaeological discoveries of warfare; the bioarchaeological and mortuary analysis of graves including those of mass burials; descriptions encoded in oral traditions; historical documents; and iconography. Examples in each of these categories are widespread, and range from cases of endemic warfare, raids, large-scale wars, and feuding, to smaller-scale domestic violence, interpersonal disputes, and even violent but accidental deaths, which often complicate these interpretations, but these can at times be recognized as isolated events that occurred outside of larger scale social conflict. The non-durable forms of violence cannot be reasonably evaluated without *emically* derived data, and therefore are not pursued from the archaeological and bioarchaeological data included in this chapter.

There are multiple lines of evidence that violent actions occurred prior to the colonialism and its associated violence that was brought and enacted by Europeans on the indigenous populations. Furthermore, these actions were differentially displayed between regions and by cultural groups, based on the culturally accepted patterns—noting of course that this acceptance is by the perpetrating populations, and then is mediated and reacted to differently based on the accepted forms of the victimized populations. Furthermore, the group level identity of perpetrators and victims were not static, nor should they be interpreted and presented as essentialized identities. Instead, they are based on temporary and shifting statuses, as discussed throughout this dissertation. A few

of the problems associated with essentialized portrayals of populations is developed in this chapter. Notably, the polarized descriptions of indigenous populations as a direct result of historic applications of essentialized identities and behavioral descriptions of populations encountered by outsiders. Not all of these portrayals are necessarily negatively constructed, but even the instances of romanticism, including the development of erroneous concepts like the *noble savage*, or descriptions of indigenous populations with childlike dispositions, are detrimental to research concerned with reconstructing the past. In fact, I see these as detrimental as the demonizing, savage, and even zoomorphic depictions that are used in the ideological dehumanization of other indigenous populations (Savage 2006).

One of the primary purposes of this chapter is to explore the questions of scope and scale in interpretations of violence. For instance, here I will discuss how the anthropological scope employed by researchers influences their interpretative capabilities. Basically, this reasoning parallels past archaeological debates about on-site and off-site archaeology, but is applied to the visibility of these events, and how even in the historic period, the anthropological scope needs to be flexible when looking at topics of regional or even local patterns of violence. Furthermore, when exploring questions of violence, we need to evaluate a time-frame of when we should begin to classify events; are there certain thresholds to which we should adhere? Can we even recognize when the first indication of harm (mentally or physically) occurred during a single moment of the mosaic of events interpreted as genocide? Or are these moments only recognizable as the event(s) accumulate? How do concepts of fixed population boundaries, by site, population, or even by region, influence how we can and do interpret past violence?

Lastly, in this chapter I present the multiple lines of evidence used by researchers examining prehistoric violence. I present the specific data sets used throughout this work from each of the following fields: archaeological, bioarchaeological, oral traditions; ethnohistoric, and iconographic. This chapter also includes a discussion of differentiations of forms and ranges in violent events in the New World. Only through the careful exploration of these varied sources of data can researchers hope to assess the patterned formations. As I delved more deeply into the associated literature, I found that the physical enactment of violence cannot be simply understood, as it often overlaps significantly in form which hinders direct interpretation(s). Instead, as researchers, we are able to reconstruct and *translate* (Brown 1981:30) behaviors that can at times leave visible indications (both intentional and unintentional) in the mortuary contexts.

### **From Eden to Hobbes: Essentialism as an Interpretive Trap**

Studies of the prehistoric New World regional and cultural areas with extensive evidence of warfare and violence have encouraged analysts to explore concepts of warrior cults, known from the historic records. In these populations, prestige could be gained by individuals who fought bravely in battles. This was so engrained in prestige-gaining societies that warfare was necessary for individuals to participate in order to receive social honors (Ellingson 2001; Gallay 2002; Gibson 1974; Pagden 1982, 1993; Rabasa 2000; Swanton 1911, 1946). The participating individuals were primarily, but not exclusively male. For instance, in some Plains populations, females could use similar strategies to gain prestige and wealth akin to their male counterparts (Albers and Medicine 1983). In other cultural and geographic areas no evidence of violence has

surfaced. The point here is that these behaviors varied greatly, and we cannot view the prehistoric populations as a homogeneous population with similar behavioral practices. However, we can isolate and discuss the large prevailing trends, and imagery that appears widespread and has large similarities in its interpretations. Much of the historic hero-twin cycles, bird-man imagery, earth-diver mythology evident in iconographic images from prehistoric contexts continued to be used by historic peoples. The historic period meanings associated with these symbolic images continue to be used to interpret some of the iconographic imagery discovered at prehistoric Mississippian Period sites (Galloway 1989; Reilly and Garber 2007), although it is understood that exact meaning of these symbols are likely localized to specific populations and traditions (Pauketat 2001).

Further complicating the interpretations of past instances of violence are the long held, though now mostly critiqued and quieted ideas of a prehistoric Eden. To some, there is a sense of modern urgency that causes the past to appear idyllic, or somehow better off and more peaceful than the current time. As such, they create a sense of nostalgia, and recreate the past through the lens of romanticism. As critiqued by George E. Marcus and Michael J. Fischer (1999:116) “The cultural criticism that anthropology has offered in the past has been immersed in the above styles of critique, and anthropology has all too often indulged in its own cross-cultural romanticism: critiquing contemporary society from the vantage point of a more satisfying other, without considering with much seriousness the practicalities of transferring or implementing the otherness in a very different social setting.” This anthropological perspective that Marcus and Fischer are discussing can inadvertently produce romanticized images and interpretations of the past, which creates a sense of modern urgency. This urgency can result from the intense nostalgia that is

imagined for the past.

Although archaeologists and other scholars recognize and discuss the range in prehistoric events of violence, they can at times still cling to the idealized and romanticized ideas of the past in new ways. For instance, the emergence of scholarship focused on climate predictability (Ember and Ember 1992) echoes the environmentally focused scholarship of the 1950's -1970's. Although these studies have been valuable in pointing out the important roles that the physical environment and climate play in the adaptive strategies used by human cultures, they can unintentionally inscribe new forms of romanticism that are now focused on a battle between the changes in climate and the cultures portrayed as being more dependent on weather for subsistence. Using this predictability as a prime motivating factor in models for these violent social interactions seems to revive ideas of an Eden although that imagery may be only inadvertently recalled. Taking this example further, the increasing data from the Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI), is conjoined with both the dendrochronological and bioarchaeological data that can in some instances leave the false impression that the climate patterns are changing more fervently now than in past eras of human existence. Maybe, but these changes are always accompanied by social pressures as well that may or may not result in violent actions, and should not be read as a direct relationship. The discussions of the French Revolution of 1789 exemplify this climate change model used in interpreting past events. Here, some are quick to point out that climate changes resulted in food shortages, leading to hunger and eventually outbreaks of rioting in France (Fagan 2000). The climate effect is only partially true, yes there were food shortages, but there were also extraordinarily high taxes, strong social and fiscal

restrictions that benefited the aristocracy at the expense of the professional and working classes. Furthermore, although the climate and resultant shortages intensify the situation, desire for more civil liberties, tax relief, and dismissal of a system that favored the aristocracy were goals in that revolution. The desires for change predate the revolution, and the climate change. Luckily, there are many, many sources that capture the social pressures in this historic event, otherwise the instances of execution might appear quite differently in the popular imagination. We need to apply this same skepticism to the past, not to in anyway imply that environmental changes are insignificant—these are at times hugely important—but more to reduce accidental polarizations in our depictions of past people.

Also, it is of utmost importance to include a discussion on the changing perspectives of prehistoric instances of violence in the New World. A significant point that emerges from this discussion involves a critique of the unintended portrayals that researchers construct while trying to convey data that could potentially damage how a population is perceived, especially after discovering a grizzly event in the cultural history of a population. When the frequency of these events is analyzed researchers find that many, if not most cultures have experienced and enacted similar events in their history. However, despite this shared thread in human experience, most cultures are not labeled as “fierce.” Alternatively, peaceful and diplomatic actions are also incorporated into these same cultures but are not always expressed in every moment. Indeed, some of these peaceful moments are even being enacted during the precise moments of violent actions. Ignoring this fluidity cripples understandings of human behavior, and provides us with incomplete conceptions of how humans relate to each other.

It is a dangerously tight wire that violence researchers sometimes find themselves on when reporting and discussing these topics, because they do not want to disable or diminish populations that incorporate the mechanisms of prestige-gain with warrior prowess (Ellingson 2001; Pagden 1982, 1993; Rabasa 2000), but we also should not overlook other behavior aspects of the same populations that seemingly contradict warrior values. If these cultural contradictions are ignored these populations may be unintentionally portrayed as brutes, or otherwise unwilling to pursue diplomatic resolutions. Furthermore, these essentialized portrayals (including those that describe populations as wholly peaceful and incapable of expressing anger or violence in any form) miss the point, and can last for decades in the literature as extreme cultural oddities. For instance, Kent Reilly (2010) recently noted during a paper he presented at the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) meetings that there has been a resurgence in the interest on warfare and human sacrifice. He clearly did not desire seeing these issues discussed in a manner that would make them a sole focal point in Mississippian period studies, which given the sensationalized past of Mississippian sacrifices this reluctance is understandable. For many years, the entire Mississippian cultural region was dubbed as both a “warrior cult” and as a “death cult.” Just as researchers continuously remind us that our pasts are not pristine, we also need to keep these in check and be certain that we do not simply switch sides to the other extreme—demonizing perpetrators of violence, or depicting the past as an entirely brutal Hobbesian style of existence.

### **The Everchanging Theoretical Tide: Scope, Scale, and Causation**

The previous chapter introduced some of the trends in the theories of prehistoric

violence. The discussion was largely centered on presenting the ranges in cultural, biological, and environmental interpretations of violence. In other words, the primary concern was presenting the theories grappling with ideas of how and even why humans use these actions in their social interactions. Taking these ideas a step closer towards analysis of the Cahokia case study, it is necessary to discuss the concepts that frame the interpretations of these behaviors. How anthropologists classify violence is dependent on the perspective level, the magnitude, and the frequency in occurrence. Only through exploring these areas can researchers hope to classify the behaviors that created the archaeological assemblages associated with social violence.

The present chapter is instead focused more on the scale and scope explored by researchers of these events. In chapter four, the focus shifts toward differentiating the intensity of these events at specific sites in the Midwest and Southeast. To clarify how these terms are used in this project: the *scale* of violence is based on the number of people involved in an event or series of connected events—a few individuals versus entire communities or populations; the *intensity* refers to the frequency in violence at a site in comparison to number of individuals killed, making it a little different than just the rate of these events, and is inclusive of concepts of scale as well; and finally, the *scope* refers to the anthropological perspective—how deeply we can or will look into these events, and based on which lines of evidence.

Additionally, I discuss where the archaeological evidence of violence is found, and some of the benefits and limits in these forms. Part of my interest in securing multiple lines of data is to demonstrate the various perspectives that sometimes offer competing information. Ultimately, I perceive the bioarchaeological data as those that can



most clearly display physical violence; however, it is impossible to find any semblance of motivation that can explain the behavior without detailed, and heavily incorporated cultural and archaeological data to support these arguments. I reject ideas that the physical violence patterns are simplistic and easily readable based on the wounds enacted on the body.

Lastly, this chapter includes a discussion on the complex interplay between portrayals of indigenous people in violence research that are frequently polarized. How we write about these actions shape how these populations are viewed not just in the anthropological field, but by the general public as well. Therefore, these studies should continue to be completed with due caution. As Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois (2004:3) write, “...it is the very *human* face of violence that we are trying to unravel here. Sadly, more violence is not “senseless” at all.” Violence is just as much a human action as peace.

#### *Scope: An Anthropologist's Perspective*

Clearly, violence is not a new phenomenon, but unlike any prior period of time we are more aware of its scale, frequency, and diversity on a global scale. Research on modern violence events has also shown time and again the rationality and all too human ability to complete these acts, and in many cases an ability to push them out of social memory or to disguise and/or mis-recognize (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) these as something else. For example, the death and destruction of much of the indigenous populations of the New World have been categorized as consequential, an unfortunate happenstance related to but not necessarily directly caused by genocidal practices of

Europeans that occurred alongside their expansion into the new world (Jones 2006). The perpetrators of this destruction are portrayed as tied to specific groups of conquistadors, cavalry soldiers, missionaries, and to a host of unintended events such as virgin soil epidemics. Seldom have these events been truly discussed as a massive, systematic genocide of indigenous populations, but have instead been historically and repetitively constructed as incidental, or worse yet accidental occurrences that occurred concurrent to but not necessarily directly related to the colonialism in the New World. This removes the *intent* from these events, reducing the recognition that these events were largely intentional. Moreover, this denial of intent keeps these events discussed as contested genocidal events, confusing future generations about the boundaries scholars can and do recognize that more firmly place these and other events into the genocidal category.

William Bradford (2006) calls for the recognition of the massive destruction of Native American populations as activities related to genocide. I tend to agree with Bradford's (2006) assessment, but see the problem as related to how we interpret the treatment of Native Americans as separate and isolated events instead of as a mosaic of all the instances. This exemplifies the notion of scope. Cultural events should be thought of as parts of the whole. By leaving these occurrences as discrete entities the image of widespread intentional destruction—although in some cases this disassociated with any articulated intent, or is mis-recognized as other behavior—of populations is muted. Furthermore, small portions of populations were often destroyed with a seemingly distanced attitude that unfortunately impedes recognition of the entire process as genocidal. Instead of focusing solely on the event-based or individual scale, we need to pull our perspective and view back to the population, and how its culture participated in

these events. Through a fluid extension of the anthropological scope these behaviors gain visibility that can be hidden at the event-based and individual level.

A debate in the *New England Quarterly* between Michael Freeman (1995) and Steven Katz (1995) demonstrates the difficulty in the applying the term genocide to the violent encounter between the Pequot and Puritans in 1637. While many Pequot individuals (a large portion were women and children) were massacred at the hands of the Puritans and their Mohegan and Narrangsett allies, it is near impossible to go back and prove that the Puritans wanted to systematically eradicate the Pequot. The extreme difficulties in proving systematic killing and intent to eradicate become especially clear when trying to examine violence on an event by event basis. In this example, not only were the Puritans aided by the Mohegan and Narrangsett, but rising social tensions between Native Americans and colonists, and violence that often accompany pursuits to expand nations and claim territories complicate this issue further. Where are the lines between warfare and genocide? I do not believe that every individual who is actively involved in a genocide event is necessarily fully aware of their role, nor that the intention of population eradication is sought by each perpetrator or even fully articulated. Instead, those who orchestrate these events may carry the intention while those who perpetrate sometimes are acting in isolation. This does not excuse the action, but is related to the scope in which behavioral practices are identified and how the connections themselves may be difficult to see with untrained eyes, or use of a fixed scope.

This is part of the explanation why the treatment and resultant genocide of Native Americans by an expanding U.S. nation has been ignored, or at least discussions of these interactions tend not to define these events as part of genocide. One can recall specific

events of this mistreatment; blankets covered with smallpox distributed by Lord Jeffrey Amherst; Indian Removal Acts; the Trail of Tears; and many other isolated events. Taken individually, the goal of systematic population decimation is nearly impossible to demonstrate for Native American populations at large, but when seen as a series of related events the pattern of violence is clear. What we need to identify are trends that point to the widespread acceptance of violence against specific populations or sectors in these populations. We need to be able and willing to adjust our scope to visualize these as interconnected events that were socially allowed as such.

How large should the anthropological purview extend? The concept of a sliding lens, or bifocals are appropriate (Appadurai 1990; Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Peacock 1986; Peters 1997) as these both see the expression of culture and the related behaviors on multiple levels. Researchers can reasonably incorporate this perspective into their works, and by doing so will better detect beliefs and behaviors that may have otherwise gone unnoticed, or mis-recognized. Stepping back to the prehistoric, archaeologists need to recognize that we are still reliant on concepts of bounded “sites” and additionally we tend to view events discretely, even in regional level analysis, these limit our interpretations, and may decrease our ability to detect and compare these patterns in behavior.

### *Scale*

Archaeologists and bioarchaeologists can explore the physical remains of direct enactments of violence only when these actions are incorporated into the archaeological and osteological records. Often this limits the inclusion of violent actions to those that

have lead to broken bones, or are evidenced by the purposeful destruction of village sites during an attack. These actions are then subdivided into classification schemes that relate the rate of occurrence with the *scale* (how many individuals were harmed/killed during the event), to try to gain insight into the motivating factors that would have lead to these actions. However, the concept of *scale* has limited some perspectives of prehistoric and historic behavior. For instance, violence operates on multiple social levels that go beyond and cross the boundaries that are constructed in the interpretations of these behaviors, such as the degree of social complexity. As explored in chapter two, much of the anthropological studies of violence, and how these actions were classified were directly informed based on the researchers' interpretations of the level of social complexity of the populations in question (Earle 1991; Service 1962), which is problematic. On one level, the number of individuals who were actively engaged in these actions is limited by the size of the population(s) involved (i.e., scale). That is to say that some forms of violence are not even brought into question while exploring violence in non-state societies solely because researchers do not distinguish scale, and the expressive goal of the behavior.

This theoretical pitfall is not limited to archaeologists and bioarchaeologists. For example, cultural anthropologist Paul Shankman (1991) compared the intensity and scale of warfare among the Dani, and rejected notions of “genocidal tendencies” based on the number of individuals that were killed during an event. Shankman (1991:301) notes, “As evidence of a 'tendency towards genocidal warfare', Blick cites the only case of secular war in the post-contact period. In 1966, there was a massacre in which nearly 125 people – men, women and children – were murdered in about an hour by coordinated attack (roughly twenty people were killed in the counter-attacks).” In this selection Shankman

points out that nobody was spared in this large and devastating attack. He continues his critique by rejecting the idea that 'genocidal' used be used to describe this event, solely based on the total number of individuals who were killed. Shankman (1991:302) writes, “While 125 deaths is a large number of people by the standards of New Guinea Highlands warfare, does it represent a 'genocidal' scale?” If the intent was to destroy that population, even if it was not realized in the number of killed, then the answer is most definitely yes! 6.25 percent of the total population was destroyed during this single event, if motivations involved the destruction of an undesired population, or a community within the perpetrating population then these actions should be interpreted as genocidal. Furthermore, Blick (1988) did not say that this was genocide—this term tends be used *post facto* description of events because of the focus on threshold and scale used in past classifications—rather, he described this event as “genocidal” which is a reasonable estimation if the ultimate goal of the violence is to destroy the victimized population or community. Additional motivations often will accompany the occurrence of genocidal events with motivating factors that can include the redefinition of population and land boundaries, political or religious ideological separation (i.e., these are at times described in terms of purity and purging of the undesired elements/communities), and reconstructions of past injustices that lead to hypersensitivity to the possible reemergence of victimizing behaviors. In other words, lands, resources, and ideological domination can be gained in addition to the attempted removal or eradication of populations.

What is evident in Shankman's (1991) response to Blick (1988) is that the ideas of threshold and scale should not be directly attached to the concept of 'genocidal' which is used to describe violence involving the purposeful destruction of populations or portions

of a population (i.e., communities). This type of violence is not consequential to conflict over vital resources or lands, but has been used as method for population reduction and/or removal used by populations to gain control or access these resources. In Paul Shankman's (1991) research, he states that the Dani conflict was not over lands, although the boundaries between populations were reconstructed and redefined following these larger attacks that occur approximately every ten to twenty years. Therefore, I do not think that either assessment of the Dani example is entirely correct. Instead, it demonstrates that these behaviors overlap to the point that interpretations do not always agree. Violence is not discrete. The descriptive complications in application of the term 'genocide' are further deconstructed in detail in chapter eight.

Discussions that rely on the technology used and scale of events (meaning number of individuals directly involved) to explain and classify violence exclude and can actually *other* these smaller non-industrialized populations further. However, if we can recognize the distinctions between the characteristic expressions of violent behavior—potentially including the goal(s) or motive(s)—from the classification of an event, then the size of the population is rendered to a lesser but still important role. In other words, there needs to be an active critique and recognition of the differences between: war versus warring; genocide versus genocidal; *et cetera*. Understanding these differences can allow for the variations in the enactment of these behaviors that had once been limited based on size to be better described and included into classificatory schemes that are flexible but encased in their construction. This widened perspective that is less reliant on direct associations between scale and form will enable better recognition of violence hence earlier detection of these events as they will be less focused on counting victims and more focused on the

degrees of exclusion and difference that are often tied into the frameworks that enabled or even sanctioned violent actions (i.e., this is a recognition of the active *identification* process discussed in chapter eight). Therefore the focus should not be so much on *scale*, but more on the how these actions develop, and the tendencies or frameworks that have enabled these. This is most important in the modern context where the prevention of some behaviors, including human rights violations and genocide are a goal in the legislation between international communities. For research rooted in the past, there will remain a reliance on the relationships between scale and frequency of attacks to describe and classify the violence; however, as long as the researchers do not let the scale drive their interpretations, and actively seek the messy overlap and gaps between enactments of violence, then this issue is at least coped with according to the best current methods.

Various borrowed terms have been used to describe the shifts in size and frequency of warring events; these include endemic and episodic warring patterns. Endemic refers to behaviors that mostly resemble raiding and feuding practices. These are often low intensity (few casualties) events that do not directly involve all members of a population. Since the number of killed individuals tends to be relatively low—from an individual to a small group per event—the interment of individuals may be in multiple, but not mass graves (Komar and Buikstra 2008, Milner et al. 1990). Further, these events can sometimes involve long series of related violence. Motivations for these events can include repeated raids for resources, as well as vengeance cycles and kin level feuding activities (Bamforth 1994; Otterbein 1968, 1979; Otterbein and Otterbein 1965; Rosaldo 1989; Williamson 2007). Endemic violence often includes lag times that allow for resources, including people, to replenish during these intervals.



Episodic violence is used to describe large attacks that can punctuate raiding cycles, or occur in isolation. The episodic attacks tend to be characterized by high intensity events and incur larger numbers of killed individuals per event compared to endemic forms. To accommodate the larger numbers of concurrently killed individuals, graves are more frequently in the mass grave style (more than three individuals were included per grave). These episodic attacks are at times accompanied by ransacking and the conflagration of the village. Strezewski (2006) describes these as “final attacks” on villages. These episodic attacks tend to include more injured, young or elderly individuals that may indicate that those who could flee would, leading to their survival. These attacks do not appear to include the chasing and capture of those who fled, so it is not likely that the goal was to eradicate these populations. I mention this here only to maintain this as a category separate from the actions that are indeed focused on population destruction. In the cases of episodic violence, there seems to be some limiting factors, such as only killing those that stayed in the immediate village area during an attack. Also, the Fisher Sites mass graves were rather quickly constructed, demonstrating that only a short time interval had passed since these village members were killed, so the attackers left, and the fear of subsequent attack might not have been immediate.

The last term that I want to include here for description is *total wars*. As the scale of the violence increases to the point where nearly all members of a society are directly involved, including an active engagement in battles, it is referred to as total wars (Markusen 1996). Here, there are no clear lines between civilians and soldiers. Often this can include women, children, and the elderly as both active combatants and victims of the violence.

## *Causation*

Violence is not senseless (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004). It is purposeful and goal oriented. Careful research can sometimes point to motivating factors that lead to the outbreak of these events within and between populations. The “ultimate” causes, are often those durable motivating factors, which are frequently reduced to resource availability, especially foodstuffs as well as land-use rights; because they are readily available to archaeologists. “While proximate or “emic” causes of violence—such as ethnic hatred, sorcery, ferocity, aggression, revenge, retaliation, fear, mistrust, theft, insults, and capture of women and sometimes children—are difficult to detect in the archaeological record, ultimate causes of both peace and violence are generally more accessible” (Dye 2009:7). Although these durable and lasting materials can sometimes be used to determine the *ultimate causes* of these event they are incapable of explaining these events fully, and are constructions made by the inferences of archaeologists. For instance, David Dye (2009:7) notes that the purposeful burning of villages is direct evidence of warfare related violence. Although this may be correct in some instances, without bioarchaeological evidence of related trauma, this is a weak line of evidence on its own. The same is true when we discuss the cultural motivations. These stand weakly alone, but over time and through careful research and reconstruction we can mosaic together more meaningful interpretations of these past behaviors that point toward motivations behind behavior. Although not all behavior is rational, nor even intentional, there are some import symbolic and other social queues that are evident in these accounts. Although the meanings imbued to symbols are polyvalent and shifting, at times

these can be linked to the larger contextualized picture.

Furthermore, some of the non-durable causes may be inferred at times, with support from oral traditions, ethnohistoric evidence, and by examining cases that do not seem to fit in the normal range of warfare related violence within a region. These activities that stand out may then be further evaluated to identify who was being targeted, which perhaps can lead to the insight behind the questions of why. Although the explorations into ideas of ethnic hatred and the like are on one level unknowable, as we cannot directly reconstruct thoughts and mind-frames, we should be able to isolate distinct populations, including those who were repeatably attacked without signs of resource, lands or even political gains. This would then point to other social reasons (non-material) that motivated these attacks.

Proximal causes of conflict are never easy to explore, even in modern cases that are entwined in these patterns of non-durable violence. The short version of this discussion is that not all individuals who participate in violence participate with the same goals, mind-frame, nor do they have an equal level of willingness. For instance, ordinary people, even victims can participate and perpetuate violent actions (Levi 1988; Mamdani 2001), some may even be blind to their own participation—thinking that their actions were limited to a few individuals rather than part of a systematic enactment or collective cultural engagement in these events (Durkheim 1984). These proximal causes are always inferred and argued in the modern context, and should not be ignored in research of the past. Of course, this type of research will never obtain this information on the individual level, but perhaps we can recognize some of the patterns of identification and victimization in the past, and apply the modern conceptions of ethnogenesis and

population level identity to these situations. These are situated and modified by the individuals who are burying these individuals, but these imposed identities can shed light on to some of the proximal causes behind these actions that move us beyond the simplistic economically based interpretations of status.

### **Evidence of Violence in the New World**

The long history of violence in the New World is demonstrated via multiple sources of evidence, and is understood using a variety of methods that include both the quantitative and qualitative forms of data. Below is an overview of some of the recent analyses of prehistoric violence including: warfare, interpersonal violence, and evidence of sites that represent events with possible genocidal tendencies. What should be apparent is the breadth of these events, the diversity of the populations in which they occurred, and why different burials within Mound 72 do not fit neatly into these categories nor should it be simplistically described as a homogenized group of ritualistically killed individuals. These darker sides of the human experience cannot be ignored or explained away in simplistic terms of land or other resource competition, and therefore, even with the limitations of dealing with a “voiceless” archaeological record, it is the job of the archaeologist to try to make sense of these events. By contextualizing and exposing the complexity of these situations we can hope to learn more about these populations even with incomplete knowledge of the social dynamics available for more recent cases.

In North America the ethnohistoric, historic, archaeological, and bioarchaeological records all provide strong evidence of prehistoric violence on various scales. Each field uses its own methods to evaluate these events, and these data can be

used together to strengthen our inferences. Many of the archaeological studies of warfare and other violent conflicts in North America have focused on data from the Southwest, Mexico, conflicts with Europeans, and the conflicts with the expanding US territories. Although there are data present for the prehistoric Southeast and Plains regions, these are not often examined within a regional or larger social framework and are frequently discussed in terms of a single site and/or a single episode. The conflation of separate events causes the larger dynamics to remain hidden, and is the result of the difficulties in reconstructing archaeological time-lines on smaller scales (Carman 1997). The collapse of time, albeit a complication for archaeologists, is not insurmountable. The sources of evidence of prehistoric violence are both diverse and widespread.

### *Bioarchaeological Evidence*

There are two terrific volumes that should be explored by anyone interested in the bioarchaeological evidence and range in research topics of violent events in the New World. These are Richard Chacon and David Dye's (2007) *The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts as Trophies by Amerindians* and Debra Martin and David Frayer's (1997) *Troubled Times: Violence and Warfare in the Past*. These edited volumes have contributions from scholars interested in vastly different regions and topics involving violent interactions in archaeological settings. Importantly, the contributions counter portrayals of the past that virtually depict the prehistoric as an extraordinarily peaceful, and even cooperative period. In addition to these edited volumes, there have been many recent contributions to various professional conferences that have been incorporated when possible. What these focused scholarly works accomplish is the development of

more accurate studies of the prehistoric social interactions that were not always peacefully negotiated.

The bioarchaeological focus in archaeology is a relatively recent recognition of the importance of the physical remains of people in research. Bioarchaeologists are uniquely trained to isolate and identify pathological stress or injury versus taphonomic damage from examining the remains. Additionally, the health, diet, demographic, and biological relationships between individuals are, at times, available for reconstruction (Larsen 1997). In studies of violence, the bioarchaeologist is expected to isolate physical evidence of these actions, as they can leave relatively comparable trauma evidence on the remains. For instance, specific bone breaks, depressions, healed versus non-healed lesions, and cut marks can all serve as evidence of violence (Chacon and Dye 2007; Larsen 1997; Martin and Frayer 1997; Milner et al. 1991; Smith 1997, 2003; Stienen 1992). However, there are also cases where individuals are killed with little to no physical evidence on the remains of individuals or where the evidence is not completely clear. The former is the case of many of the killed inclusions in Mound 72. In this case the demographic profile has pointed to the presence of unnatural selection in the deaths of over 118 non-local females at Cahokia. As mentioned in chapter two, the demographic age and sex profiles can bolster support of these actions further, and can help distinguish the form of violence that was enacted in a specific context, which is exceptionally important in cases where the injury was not visible on the skeletal remains of victims. This point reemerges in the discussions in chapter six and eight.

Although the bioarchaeological analysis of trauma can demonstrate patterns of violence enacted on the bodily remains of individuals, these can be misinterpreted, as

made evident in the review of the King Site in Georgia (Milner et al. 2000). The remains from this site had appeared to its original researcher as resulting from a traumatic encounter with DeSoto and his men; however, upon further inspection, the remains were later reinterpreted as exhibiting damage from rodent gnawing as opposed to marks derived from steel blades. This example demonstrates how even misinterpretations have entered in and shaped how these past events have been interpreted and portrayed. Through the comparison of the archaeological and bioarchaeological evidence to the historical records, the discrepancies at the King site were revealed.

For the case study in this research, it is widely known that this mortuary context includes some individuals elaborately arranged and embedded with recognizable mythic symbols; additionally it is recognized that a large proportion of the individuals interred were selectively killed and buried here. This mixed context allows us to reconstruct some of how Cahokians saw themselves and others, as inferred from the mortuary context. Only by using the bioarchaeological evidence that has accumulated for Cahokia and other included sites in comparison to the historical and ethnographic data can we hope to gain deeper insight into this mixed burial context.

In addition to the published sources of data I am using the original burial forms, photographs, and notes from Jerome Rose's files. These have been a fantastic resource in this reconstruction. These data are compared to the data from other sites from the Midwest and Southeast during the AD 900-1700 time-frame in chapter four. Sites selected for inclusion had comparable bioarchaeological and archaeological data that had been analyzed and published that overlapped with the patterns present in the Cahokia data set.

### *Archaeological Evidence*

Archaeological studies of prehistoric violence have focused on the settlement patterns, defensive features, weaponry, scale and intensity of encounters, and strive to isolate social or environmental stress factors that would lead to warfare, or that could intensify these behaviors (Carmen 1997; Chacon and Dye 2007; Dye 2009; Ember and Ember 1992; Ferguson 1990a, 1990b 1997; Haas 2001; LeBlanc 1997; Lekson 2002; Martin and Frayer 1997; Milner 2007; Milner et al. 1991; Otterbein and Otterbein 1965; Shankman 1991; Steinen 1992; Trubitt 2003a). There are large variations in these materials across the Prehistoric sites in North America. Furthermore, when discovered and analyzed not all of the found weaponry and defensive features had been visibly used in battles as revealed by wear patterns (Andrefsky 2001).

Archaeological evidence of violent acts can be described as direct and indirect, following descriptions provided by David Dye (2009:7-16). Direct evidence includes the physical data that is interpreted from the bodies of individuals and archaeological assemblages that demonstrate purposeful destruction of villages, particularly those that are immolated by fire. Throughout the Midwest and Southeast, sites that were involved in violent encounters with outside populations constructed defensive features that are archaeologically visible. Further, specific weaponry was developed and is found at these site locations. When this weaponry evidences use in battle then it is considered as direct archaeological evidence; otherwise, it and the construction of defensive features or movement to new locations are indirect indications of intergroup conflict.

The second line of direct evidence suggested by Dye (2009:7) is that of the village destruction by fire. This is a widely practiced action in the warring behaviors in the



Midwest and Southeast. This action is embedded with a deeply symbolic pollution of villages and their relationships to kin groups, as the secular fire consumes not just the village, but as the sacred fires that are culturally important in the renewal of the earth (Figure 3.1). This interrupts social relationships between communities by polluting the renewal of the social ties between communities who were connected by sharing their sacred fire; these related villages were called *talwas* (Lankford 1987:54-56). The discussion of archaeological evidence is continued at great length in chapter four, which includes a discussion of frequency, intensity, and scale of these events that are reconstructable using archaeological data.



Figure 3.1 Village on fire (1564). Engraving by Theodor de Bry. Plate XXXI from the *Kraus Collection of Sir Francis Drake*. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress.

### *Iconographic Evidence*

Throughout the Mississippian populations, art and the depictions of violence, fertility, and hero figures were widely shared. These iconographic trends have been portrayed as shared religious, political, and secular ideologies (Brown 1981, 1997; Galloway 1989; Reilly and Garber 2007; Lankford 2007a, 2007b; Sabo 2010). The images of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex (Waring and Holder 1945), also known as the MIIS, or the Mississippian Ideological Interaction Sphere (Reilly and Garber 2007) include those of: warriors, falcon-dancers, weeping eyes, cross and circle, serpents, chunkee players, and trophy skulls and limbs. Although these depictions should not be interpreted as direct evidence that violent events have occurred, what they offer is an idea of what events fit into the creative cultural experience. That is to say, that these represent behaviors that at times are culturally important and coherent.

These images were created and replicated on copper plates, shell gorgets, pottery, and as pictographs/petroglyphs for archaeologists to explore (Figures 3.2, 3.3). Themes that overlap with oral traditions have been identified, and although we should not assume that they will exactly inform each other, what is evident is that they do relate and connect, and offer some insight into hero-legends, mythic relationships, and are used to recreate the narratives of the world. It is likely that the iconographic art extends further with associated meanings, and their limited distributions can support ideas that the ownership and use of these items may have been restricted in populations, or that they fell into a limited number of hands. Perhaps the individuals whom were entrusted with these artifacts would need to protect and maintain the material and ideological symbols (i.e., the associated narratives, myths, figures, *et cetera*) that were associated with these items

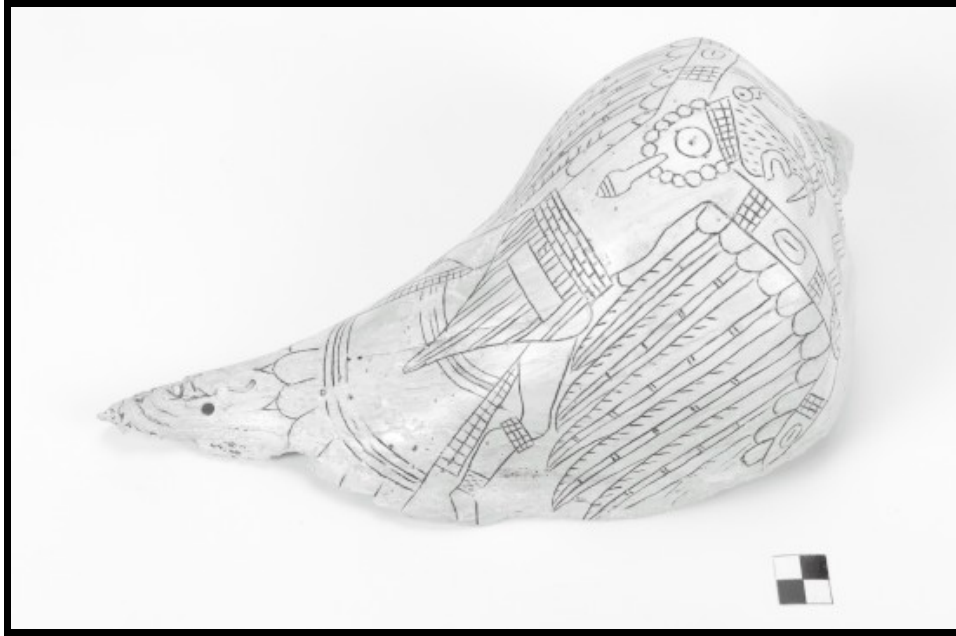


Figure 3.2 Engraved whelk shell. Bird-man on shell. Craig B style, from Spiro in LeFlore County Oklahoma. Courtesy, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (Cat. No. 189121.000). Photo by NMAI Photo Services Staff. Modified by author.



Figure 3.3 Effigy pipe. Warrior decapitating captive. Courtesy, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (Image No. T214088). Photo by NMAI Photo Services Staff. Modified by author.

as indicated in the passing of knowledge with bundles and other culturally important artifacts (Harrod 1987; Radin 1948). Iconographic symbols that have encoded violence include images of decapitated heads, limb removal, falcon dancers carrying severed heads (possibly representing a hero-legend associated with individual and population recovery and reestablishment), and ones that include weaponry where the lines between secular and mythic are blurred. The material items were frequently damaged, leading Kent Reilly (2010) to suggest that these items were not merely decorative, nor were held by people to legitimize kin relationships, rather that they were used to reveal the outcomes of social interactions via prognostication rituals. This idea is further support by an engraving by Theodor de Bry (1591), entitled “Trophies and ceremonies after a



Figure 3.4 Trophies on Display. Engraving by Theodor de Bry. Plate XVI from the *Kraus Collection of Sir Francis Drake*. Rare and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress. Modified by author.

victory,” plate number 16 (Figure 3.4). The engraving depicts a dancer holding a large statuary as he dances near trophy limbs with the Europeans observing this post-battle ritual.

### *Ethnohistoric and historical records in the Southeast*

The ethnohistoric and historic records of events have been recorded and published in multiple sources, including those from explorers, settlers, clergy, conquistadors, and chroniclers. Some of these documents have been directly translated and transcribed as primary sources while others are referenced in collections that were commissioned by agencies, such as the Board of American Ethnology. The records often offer (the much desired) qualitative details to past events that may not be available to archaeologists. These must be critically evaluated prior to their use in research, but are immensely valuable when considered during the reconstruction of cultural contexts.

Below are three different forms of data that were encoded into some of these accounts and that were used in this analysis. As these data are not available directly for Cahokia, the regional trends will be evaluated without assuming that these later events can wholly explain the situation for Cahokia. First, these textual accounts can provide data enlightening to the discourse of what actually spurred or motivated conflict within a region, therefore, reducing conflicting interpretations of events. Second, also encoded in these accounts are data demonstrating different forms of similar events, or multiple circumstances under which specific events may occur. Third and last for this discussion, there are some descriptions of the cultural materials involved in some of these events that

provide useful knowledge for archaeological interpretation.

Concerning the first point, there are differences in interpretations of motivations for Southeastern warfare. Lewis Larson's (1972) research of ethnohistoric and historic descriptions of the Southeast populations indicates that warfare occurred to gain and maintain access to resources and lands. Jon Gibson (1974) critiques this explanation, noting that his research of the Natchez suggests that a primary cause of warfare involved attempts to increase social and/or political status. Gibson supports his argument by stating that no examples of the exchange of use-rights to lands and/or resources are found in the sources he examined. However, this is not conclusive evidence that use-rights were not exchanged. His research of the Natchez also cannot confirm that these populations participated in warfare for the same reasons that earlier Mississippian populations engaged in these activities. This example illustrates the need for more research of the records that reveal the complexity of these events.

Other motivations for warfare that were clear in the historical accounts included raids for captives for slavery, captives for soul displacement, vengeance based headhunting, and to gain captives for sacrifice rituals. Ron Williamson (2007) explored the role of captive-taking among prehistoric Iroquoian populations.

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, war was waged both among Iroquoian groups and between them and some of their Algonquian neighbors. War was waged not in competition for scarce resources or land but in an ongoing struggle to avenge the violent deaths of one or more members of one group by killing or capturing members from the group responsible for those deaths. This kind of feuding should be viewed as self-perpetuating, institutional part of the Northern Iroquoian life best understood in the context of Iroquoian culture (Trigger 1967:154; Richter 1983). Indeed, to achieve notice as a brave warrior would appear to have been the most effective way for young men to acquire prestige. (Williamson 2007:193)

Williamson (2007) continues the discussion with religious and ritual support of the captive-prestige model.

These behaviors should also be viewed in the context of Iroquoian religious beliefs. Not only were war activities and dreaming linked as warriors sought supernatural support and information from shamans and their dreams, but the taking and sacrifice of prisoners was highly ritualized (Trigger 1967, 1969:44-53; Richter 1983:533-534). The act of beheading to access the brain can even be equated with a mythical figure named Oscotarach (pierce-head), who inhabited a cabin on the road to the village of the dead. He was known to draw the brains out of the heads of the dead and keep if not eat them (Thawaites 1896-1901, 10:147; Tooker 1964:141). (Williamson 2007:193)

Prisoner adoption and/or their sacrifice was a decision made by an adopting family (Williamson 2007:194-195). Although it is influenced by the behavior of the captive, this is often in less predictable ways. For instance, although defiance was expected and usually respected as an honor-gaining strategy for captives, there is little reason to believe that this increased the likelihood of survival by adoption. Actually, what seems most relevant in captive narratives from the historic periods in the United States was the age of the captive. Typically older children, from around 7 to 12 years of age were eligible for adoption, and would acclimate so well into the cultures of their captors that recovery later proved detrimental to some of these individuals (Cole 2000).

The second point is focused on the specificity of these encoded events and the issue of *equifinality*—where the archaeological assemblages are created by different behaviors, but appear identically. To illustrate the importance of the textual accounts of violence events, the practice of human sacrifice is discussed in relationship to belief systems and to secularized behavior. This is an important topic to touch on within this project, specifically because of the large numbers of individuals who were killed for presumably “ritual” or non-warfare related purposes and were included in Mound 72. These collective burials have been previously interpreted as a homogeneous group of “low status” individuals, despite the variations displayed in the mode of death, demography, and burial treatments. Some of the killed individuals appear as retainers

while others were selected based on their age and biological sex for inclusion. Not all the killed individuals in Mound 72 should be viewed as equally “sacrificial” as this mutes the visible distinctions in the mortuary contexts. Those who were killed and interred with the Sub1 structure were distinctive from other individuals killed and buried in this mound group, some may have been “retainers,” defined as members of a population killed to serve or protect important personages in the afterlife, but not all were included identically in this context.

Taken further, reports written by early chroniclers, missionaries, and explorers in the New World demonstrate that the practice of human sacrifice varied in populations, and there was no universal structure in form nor in the motivating factors. The sacrificial practices of several populations have been compared to the Cahokia data including the sacrificial practices of the Natchez and nearby populations (Lorenz 2000; Rose 1999), the Skiri-Pawnee Morning Star sacrifice (Hall 1997, 2000), and the Aztecs sacrifices of captives at Tenochtitlan (Hall 2000; Kehoe 2010; López Luján 2005). There are other sacrificial practices that could be further explored such as the cenote sacrifices at Chichén Itzá (Romey 2005), and the sacrifices among the Taensa (Gallay 2002) performed to appease deities. Some of these killings included prisoners captured from other populations, while others were in-group members that were selected during difficult social times (Gallay 2002).

Throughout the examples of human sacrifice in the New World, it is clear that people were sacrificed differentially based on their inter and inner population positioning. In other words, these behaviors were enacted for a variety of reasons and used individuals who were insiders and those who were outsiders for different situations. These variations



were mediated by beliefs, but in this cursory view, it was rapidly apparent that even those sacrifices that were performed for religious reasons (i.e., to placate or otherwise appease demanding deities) could overlap with the secular patterns of violence including the sacrifice of captives, that could include prisoners of war (Bostrom 2004; Hofstadter 2005; López Luján 2005; O'Connor 1995), retainers (Ambrose et al. 2003; Bostrom 2004; Brown 1989:17; O'Connor 1995; Pauketat 2004; Sears 1958:280; Swanton 1911, 1946), and individuals sacrificed to appease deities (Erdoes and Ortiz 1984; Usner 1998:48). These accounts require continued critical evaluation, but are useful in exploring some of the variation we see in the various burial features within Mound 72. It is likely that the differential arrangement of the Mound 72 burials indicate that they are representative of different aspects of the Cahokian belief system, and furthermore the individuals interred in Mound 72 were not sacrificed as a homogeneous group, some were killed and buried several generations after the initial mound construction and burials.

Among the Natchez, early chroniclers mention several variations of human sacrifice, some of which contain selection based on age and sex and other victims were selected based on various social statuses held by these individuals (i.e., marital and social-prestige status). Visible variations between these acts include mode of sacrifice (i.e., auto-sacrifice versus assisted), and burial location. The chronicler accounts can provide useful clues about the relationships between the type of sacrifice and burial treatment, and have been examined to widen the lenses of contextual data in this and other analyses. These accounts should not be expected to contain all the clues, nor even exactly parallel what is discovered archaeologically. Some differences should be expected because these behaviors were not performed by the same population. Even in areas where

there are tightly-knitted, historically-situated continuity, like among the Caddo in the southern Mississippi drainage basin. This cultural continuity does not mean that these populations remained static in their beliefs or behaviors, just that their ancestors were located in the same regional area. Therefore, the use of the enriching ethnohistoric data should be used carefully, and it should be anticipated that the differences between the ethnohistoric data and the archaeological context will become apparent, but does not act as a complete interpretive barrier.

The third point is focused on the material goods included in acts of violence that are encoded in textual accounts. These data provide detailed examples of the types of defensive architecture and weaponry used, and also include possible motivations for warfare among ancient populations in the Southeast. For example, in the Natchez accounts those who were sacrificed at the death of a Sun (i.e., the retainers) were drugged with a potent tobacco compound, or given a derivative of the black drink mixture with deadly toxins, and then were strangled or bludgeoned by a mace (Hudson 1979; O'Connor 1995; Swanton 1911, 1946). However, historic records only provide possible scenarios. Although some of the mass graves in Mound 72 exhibit a similar patterning by having been killed and interred with what appears as significant individuals, not all these individuals were killed in a single event. Furthermore, there are several modes of death and mortuary arrangements among the large groups of killed individuals. These differences reduce the ability to make clear connections between all the killed individuals and any specific leader, as does the non-local status of some of the killed that is further deconstructed in chapters six and seven.

The presence of some potential retainers has led some to look at the stages of burial performance, including the stages recorded by DuPratz as told to him by some Natchez, but was never directly observed (Byers 2006; Rose 1999; Swanton 1911, 1946). The Mound 72 burial stages are clearly not identical to the Natchez who not only practiced secondary burials, but additionally, the Natchez sacrificed groups of willing retainers for leaders and other significant members of the society, and these individuals had access to a prestige-gaining strategy through their participation. The local residents were therefore encouraged to participate in these rituals, and this participation solidified kin networks that were tied into the honor-gain by increasing the honor and prestige of kin groups who participated. Additionally, the Natchez relocated the remains of some important individuals to undisclosed locations (Byers 2006), but there is no evidence that there were any bodies removed for interment elsewhere. Similarities between the Natchez and the Cahokian burials include: a distinctive charnel house for body processing; the secondary burial of some individuals, and some individuals were killed although it appears that they were killed for different reasons. It is important to note that these similarities are included at other sites in the Southeast and Midwest, especially in such general terms.

Interestingly, the only weapons that were included in Mound 72 were not directly related to the deaths of the killed individuals. Three caches of arrowheads were neatly arranged in the mound, and appear as though they were hafted to their shafts when included into the ground. The caches included a variety of styles and colors, and are impressive. The symbolic connections between the arrows and specific mythic performances are widely discussed (Hall 1997, 2000; Pauketat 2007). Specifically, the

inclusion of arrows supports interpretations of cultural referencing of both Red-Horn and Mourning Star performances. At this point, it should be made expressly clear that the only two individuals who displayed any injuries from arrowheads were interred during the later Mound 72 constructions, while the arrow caches were interred during the Mound 72 Sub1 construction (Ahler 1999). Therefore, it does not seem likely that the individuals injured by arrows were participating in rituals similar to the Skiri-Pawnee Mourning Star ritual (Hall 2000), although the larger mythic cycles appear cited in this burial group.

### *Oral Traditions*

Contributions from folklore and ethnographic studies have helped to make archaeological explorations, and the resultant interpretations for sites, a rich and rewarding experience. Instead of stale accounts of artifacts devoid of meaning, these accounts can shine through the glimmers of meaning of material goods, because these areas of study are devoted to gaining emic perspectives. These traditions have been recorded with varying levels of rigor by many, including some anthropologists interested in recording, preserving, and analyzing these traditions. The specific symbolism included in the Mound 72 mortuary context required the exploration of several published oral tradition sources.

In this project, I consulted Paul Radin's (1948) Winnebago Red-Horn and Hero Twin Cycles; a variety of legends included in George Lankford's (1987) volume *Native American Legends: Southeastern Legends*; Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz's (1984) collection of recorded oral traditions; and explored the contemporary interpretations of

these accounts from works like Kent Reilly and James Garber's (2007) edited volume *Ancient Objects and Sacred Realms: Interpretations of Mississippian Iconography*. Each of these sources shaped my understanding of the myths and how these are differentially enacted in the rituals used by populations. Myths and legends are incomplete glimpses of worldviews. They are dissected and used with the important goal of understanding limited and specific contexts. These need to be cautiously explored but can greatly enhance interpretations of worldviews and behaviors that have been symbolically embedded in these accounts. As noted by Violet, daughter of Pomo cultural interlocutor Mabel McKay, the oral traditions and ritual performances of the Pomo myths are frequently misread as complete and non-related isolates of cultural stories (Sarris 1993:73) instead of realizing that the telling of particular parts of the story can be stopped for performance reasons, that they are the ongoing frame for reality. Myths and legends create, explain, and shape worldviews, and allow the participants to adjust them to form new realities (Schieffelin 1985). However, this does not reduce their importance in highlighting socially important values and offer some frames to begin the exploration of meanings embedded in symbolic behavior and materials. In fact, I disagree with some of the uses of oral traditions when there are attempts to fit the data to the oral account, and alternatively when accounts are rejected because they do not entirely conform to the archaeological context. Both these forms of use hide the constructive cultural variants in the use and telling of the traditions.

The recorded oral traditions of populations sometimes outline existing social tensions between populations. For instance, although the bioarchaeological data ultimately do not support the Osage Rite of the Wa-Xo'-Be, Alice Kehoe's (2007:256-

257) linkage to the oral record created a refreshing stance on the differential burials present in Mound 72. Here she does not assume that rank and status are the only cultural markers that were included by the participants who created this mortuary context. Instead, Kehoe offers an explanation that went beyond looking for elite versus non-elite persons. By stepping away from the economic mortuary interpretations, Kehoe was able to explain the presence of matting that was contained in some of the mass-graves (Komar and Buikstra 2008) of killed persons, as ritual tools used in ceremonial performances before impending wars. Although I do not think that this ritual performance was specifically that of the Wa-Xo'-Be—there are some discrepancies in the demographic compositions and overall directional structure used in the Wa-Xo'-Be that is lacking in the archaeological structure and timing of Mound 72 events—a similar ritual or another that is performed with a similar structure and tools is a reasonable inference.

Kehoe (2007) was also able to accommodate the differences between burial groups in her interpretation. The large, gaping issue with Kehoe's paper is that it failed to match up to the bioarchaeological data in which she was trying to make this ritual fit. For instance, she ignores age and gender categories that are recited in the text in order to fit some spatial arrangement in Mound 72 that was not present in the Rite of the Wa-Xo'-Be text. While this was not a necessary step, I think it weakened her overall refreshing interpretation. As Robert Hall (2000) notes about the flexibility and active change in the interpretation of gender identity during Morning Star sacrifice ceremonies, the identity of the participants is creatively changed throughout the performance of this ritual; therefore, the individuals' identities are changed and muted by the imposition of a newly formed identity.

Despite discrepancies between the Osage Wa-Xo'-Be and the Mound 72 data, Kehoe's analysis moves the interpretations of this burial context in a useful direction by linking the oral traditions to the mortuary context. However, the oral traditions cannot be used at the expense of the bioarchaeology evidence. In actuality, I would have had an even more positive critique of Kehoe's analysis if she simply said that it resembled the Wa-Xo'-Be text, and explained the difference as creative performance of distinguished cultural beliefs, rather than trying to force the “fit” to what obviously did not match precisely. Continued incorporation of related oral traditions can help research expand in interesting ways that would not be available without these careful inclusions. What should not be attempted in studies that include the oral data is a direct linking of the mortuaries or other archaeological contexts to the oral traditions. This causes fitting based on the archaeologists' interpretations, rather than pointing to a link in the citational references culturally embedded in these symbolic inclusions. Furthermore, there are frequently variations in the recordings of these traditions based on population differences, as well as differences in the narrators that allow these traditions to adapt to local and generational beliefs. The archaeologist can and should point to similarities between the archaeological context and oral traditions, but should refrain from completely trying to frame the context with these data.

### **Bringing the Evidence Together to Make Sense of Prehistoric Violence**

The exploration of prehistoric violence is a relatively new research area, and it has gained significant amounts of interest and empirical evidence in the last decade. As pointed out here and by multiple researchers throughout the edited volume *Troubled*

*Times: Violence and Warfare in the Past* (Martin and Frayer 1997), the strong tendency to romanticize the prehistoric period has dissuaded research of violence in the prehistoric, because of misinterpretations of the relevance of these data. Populations interacted in various ways, from symbolic warring and counting coup, to greater intensity battles. The tendency to romanticize the prehistoric New World has changed as more data have been rigorously explored, and continual careful analyses have remade this once thought of *prehistoric haven* into an existence that is more realistically human. That is to say that humans are depicted more accurately as capable and willing to oscillate between these peaceful and violent behaviors depending on the contextual situations in which they are positioned. These contexts shift, but are sometimes visible in the archaeological and bioarchaeological records. Through careful contextualization of the archaeological record, and by using as many lines of evidence available, only then can we begin to understand what happened during the distant events.

The romanticism of the prehistoric periods has at times developed to the point that violent interactions were interpreted as indicating contact with Western practices that corrupted, heightened, and intensified violent reactions in otherwise peaceful indigenous worlds (Blick 1988). This is hugely problematic. By denying and minimizing the violent events that are found in the prehistoric periods, we continue to, albeit a completely unintentional result, “other” these populations further. Not only are warriors who gained prestige through warring disempowered by these erroneous accounts, but it reduces the range in interpretations so severely that the people are portrayed as being incapable of participating in violent interactions. They are constructed as childlike, and rendered impotent by their cultural innocence (Rabasa 2000). Furthermore, the occurrence of



violence that predates European expansion has been documented not just in the New World, but all over the globe. For example, in Paul Shankman's (1991) rejection of Blick's (1988) conceptions of the prevalence of prehistoric violence as resultant from European contact, Shankman points out that violence had a history that extended back prior to European colonialism in New Guinea. Shankman further notes that violence is likely present elsewhere as well in encounters completely separate from Europeans. By denying these instances of violent interactions we are misrepresenting how populations deal with groups in constructing social relationships, and we propagate imagined scenes that have time and again been demonstrated as false and romantic views of the past. The bioarchaeological analysis and reconstruction of prehistoric violence offers realistic portrayals of past populations. Further incorporation of the symbolic understanding of these interactions then allows connections to potential meanings that are embedded in the socially transmitted forms that the analysis of bioarchaeological context cannot provide.

## **--CHAPTER FOUR--**

### **SOCIALLY INDUCED TRAUMA (NON-ACCIDENTAL): FROM AD 900-1350 AT SITES IN THE SOUTHEAST AND MIDWEST**

The following chapter contains a broad overview of significant data on prehistoric trauma evidence that resulted from social conflict from sites primarily located in the Southeast and Midwest. It is not intended to be an exhaustive catalog of warfare nor to recount fully individualized events of violence. Instead, this chapter is focused on demonstrating the overall trend of these interactions and these data are derived from sites where the bioarchaeological research were accessible and the remains exhibited pathological indications consistent with socially induced trauma. Trauma evidence ranges from mutilations: scalping, decapitation, trophy-taking; killing blows: depressions/fracture of bones from ax and mace implements; arrow wounds; and non-specific trauma: poison, strangulation, and other possibilities that have not left clear lesions on the victims' remains. The events included range from repeated raids, episodic destruction of villages, larger massacres that devastated populations, and killings that have both warfare and non-warfare (i.e., religious significance/sacrificial) meanings attached.

The main objectives of this chapter are to present and discuss the fluctuations in intensity of violence at these prehistoric locations in a broadly defined region. A secondary objective is to demonstrate some of the overlap in concepts of violence enacted as “ritualized behavior” and secularized patterns of violence. That is, the performance of violent acts results in trauma patterns which are often indistinguishable.

Therefore, in exploring prehistoric cases of violence the archaeological research needs to go beyond the analysis of osteological data, and delve into the bioarchaeological context (Skinner 1987; Skinner et al. 2003; Ubelaker 2002).

In the examples outlined in this chapter, I have included victims of secular warfare as well as those who have been thought to have been killed following the death of significant social group members, and those who were killed for other “ritualized” or “ceremonial” reasons. However, these concepts are not completely distinct and bounded behaviors. Since warfare itself is more often than not “ritualized” and is frequently embedded with concepts of ritual purity (Douglas 1966), and population virility. I prefer to discuss the victims of non-warfare related killings as resultant from non-secular behaviors. In most cases, I expect there to be significant overlap between these categories, because I continually encountered that in the literature. For example, the term *Holocaust* refers to the 'whole burnt' in Greek, and was associated with ritual offering dedicated to a deity. It has since been used to describe any large scale attempt to destroy a population—including by Winston Churchill to describe the Armenian exile and resultant 1.5 million deaths—and only after World War II was the use of the term *Holocaust* restricted to refer primarily to the Nazi destruction of between eleven to seventeen million people (Jones 2006; Niewyk 2000; Small and Singer 1982) in a highly industrialized manner—that has impacted how populations and international legislation conceptualize and imagine the scale and ritualized enactment of genocidal violence. That is, the use of the term *Holocaust* became deeply associated with the Nazi violence in World War II, and even transformed into dual meaning term with clear symbolic references to the burning of bodies at internment camps. Here, the overlap between the

overtly symbolic and the secular is obvious.

In the exploration of prehistoric violence, we need to keep at hand the concept of *genocidal*; that is the destruction of populations in part or as a whole with the goal of reduction or the entire eradication of the people. At the same time, we need to divorce this concept from the notion of scale as evidenced by research on the Dani (Blick 1988; Shankman 1991). It is clear that the descriptive terms of violence are not straightforward nor in direct relationships to the concepts of scale. The scale and performance of killing of the perceived non-desirable populations by the Nazis evokes the concept of efficiency in mass production, and here in mass destruction and killing that causes this behavior to appear differently from the related expressions of “ethnic cleansing” and other related violence that cannot be explained as resultant from resource competition, land acquisition, or even ideological strife. Instead, these actions are tied to the concepts of population purity, and destruction of populations that are portrayed as entirely separate, different, and perhaps in some instances not even human. The term “ethnic cleansing” has often been applied to cases where cultural groups are isolated and systematically removed from the population at large. There is less of a focus on the population biology, but this is still assumed on some levels by some who used the term ethnicity to inappropriately imply biologically distinctions, rather than social distance.

Additionally, the relationship between warfare and non-warfare resultant killings is not always straightforward, as discussed in chapter six which is focused on captivity at the case site, Cahokia. As previously mentioned, violent activities can and do overlap. I interpret this overlap between warfare related and non-warfare related killing as having occurred within the Mound 72 data-set. For instance, my perception of the female

captives who were killed at Cahokia is that they were not only included in a ceremonial mythic tableau (Brown 2005; Reilly 2010), but these females were also acquired through warfare raiding activities, or demanded as tribute. In either case, these females were non-locals who were included into Cahokian populous as a separate population at some time before their ultimate inclusion into the burial arrangement. As this inclusion was warfare related, or perhaps based on ideas of social-dominance/tribute, we cannot write of them as strictly part of the mythic performance. Nor can we assign their killings and arrangement solely in non-warfare related terms. The restriction of age/sex for young, reproductive females also necessitates a further analysis of this selection as not only purposeful, but in terms of reproductive restriction of an outsider, non-local population(s). The overlaps between warfare and non-warfare related violence should not be ignored, but demonstrate that these behaviors are not discrete and are instead intertwined.

### **Overview of Patterned Violence**

This overview begins in the Late Woodland/Emergent Mississippian periods near AD 900 and stretches into the late Mississippian and Oneota periods around AD 1350. This large time depth allows us to view the overall patterns of violence that surely resulted from a range of behaviors. These various sites and their interpretations are continuously pulled back and compared to the Cahokia case study, with the goal of critical evaluation of the extreme variance in the forms of violence displayed at these sites. This includes differences in the scale, scope, and intensity of these violent events, which is explored to identify the conditions that were outlined as anticipated features of

mass killings with genocidal tendencies that were included at the end of chapter two. My goal is to test the anticipated trends using a large range of examples from the Southeast and Midwest.

In the current chapter, I present the leading theories used to explain these occurrences at each site presented, but I remind readers that this overview should in no way be read as a progression in form nor in the severity of violent actions. These are mostly isolated occurrences, at least from each other, and are not intended to demonstrate ideas of intensification. Frankly, the region here is too broad and includes multiple cultural groups spanning several centuries. This is, however, a chronology of a few of the better known examples of violence from these regions and periods, and is meant to demonstrate some of the various ways that socially induced trauma can appear at these sites. It is intended to help clarify often complex events by reducing them to variations in intensity and scale. Also, it is essential to note that although warfare practices do intensify in some areas during the Mississippian period, this intensification was often interpreted from changing settlement patterns in sites, and increases in the amount of weapons found at sites, not from the physical remains of individuals who display evidence of these violent interactions.

I have included a range of sites throughout the Mississippian cultural area, with a concentration on those in Illinois and the northern periphery, and several examples from the later Oneota populations to the north (Figures 4.1, 4.2). Also included, are two sites from South Dakota, Crow Creek and Larson Village (39WW2). The Larson Village site in South Dakota, postdates the entire Mississippian period, but demonstrates a marked change in the warfare/raiding practices from some Mississippian and Oneota sites. The

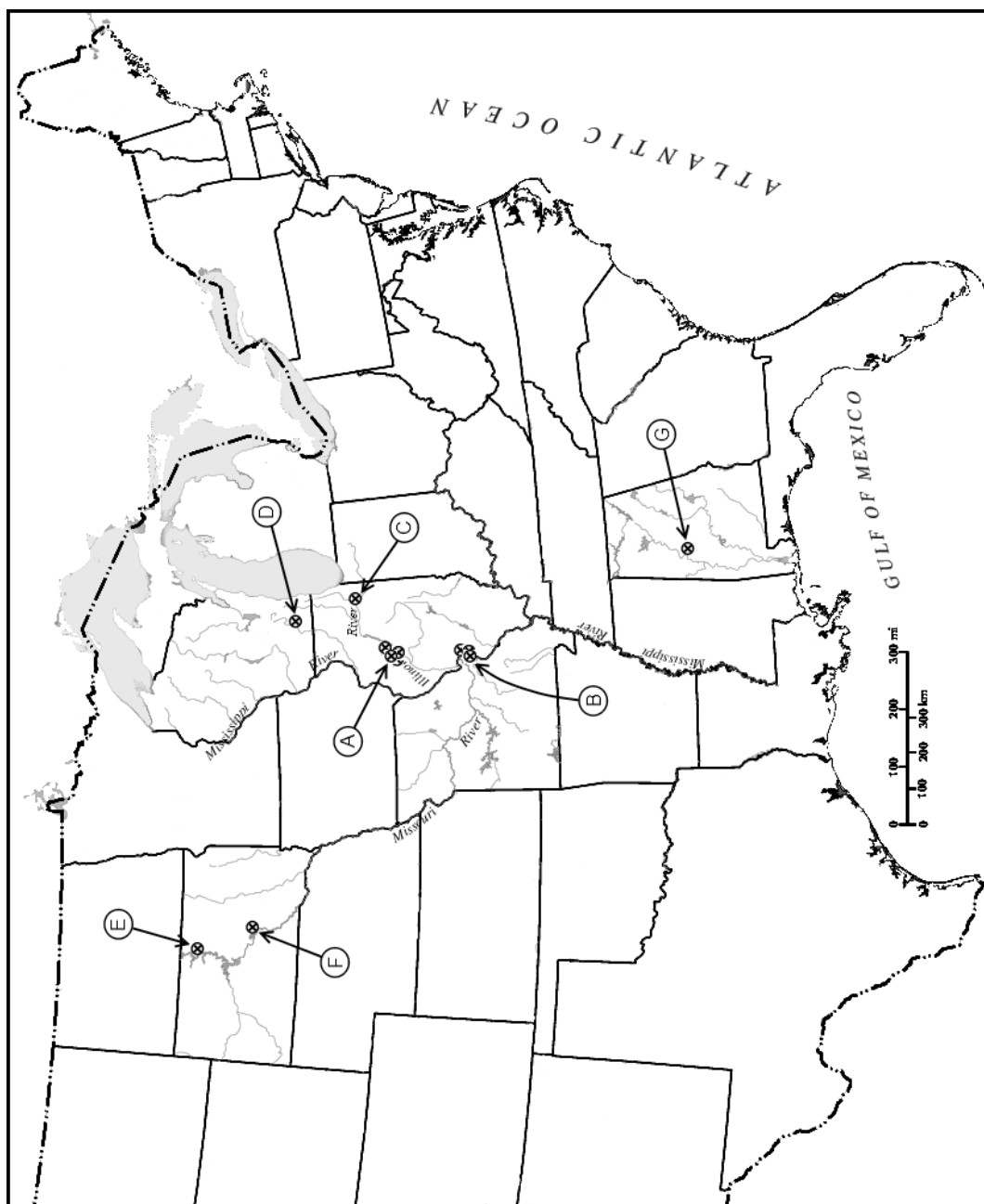


Figure 4.1 Map of included archaeological sites displaying various forms of violence. Sites: A. Norris Farms, Orendorf, Larson, Dickson Mounds; B. St. Louis, East St. Louis, Cahokia; C. Fisher Site; D. Aztalan; E. Larson (39WW2); F. Crow Creek; G. Moundville.

sites from South Dakota represent locations where the warfare style is not one of raiding, but of greater intensity events (Strezewski 2006). These high-intensity events result in higher numbers of casualties that cross demographic age-sex profiles. As such, they are classified as massacre events, where the goal was likely that of an “*ethnic cleansing*” (Pauketat 2004:157). At its core, *ethnic cleansing* and *genocidal behaviors* are enacted with the same goal of population eradication, with genocide being the all inclusive term, and ethnic cleansing referring specifically to the targeted removal of a population that shares beliefs, behaviors, and practices nested in cultures. Typically a shared heritage, or kinship is assumed, but this can include fictive kin constructions (Buikstra 2005). Ironically, ethnicities had been one of the original four protected populations in international laws constructed to prevent genocidal violence, as further discussed in chapter eight.



Figure 4.2 Map of included archaeological sites displaying various forms of violence in the American Bottom.



The Larson Site (39WW2) in South Dakota is mentioned in several writings on Mississippian violence and warfare, and as a means of limiting any confusion, there are two Larson sites: Larson Village A.D. 1250-1300 and Larson Village (39WW2) 1750-1785. Both are included in various writings about Mississippian warfare patterns and it is important to include both here. I have also included several Mississippian sites that display evidence of larger, higher intensity and episodic attacks in this chapter for discussion.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Included Sites and Features</u>
900-1000 AD	Consolidation, Defensive Features and Locations, Bufferzones
1000-1050 AD	Cahokia's Mound 72, Illinois
1150-1200 AD	East St. Louis, Illinois
1150-1700 AD	Aztalan, Wisconsin
1150-1250 AD	Orendorf Site, Illinois
1200-1250 AD	Increases in Fortifications, and Pathological Evidence of Conflict
1200 AD	Dickson Mounds, Illinois
1250-1300 AD	Larson Village, West-Central Illinois
1200-1300 AD	Moundville, Alabama
1225-1330 AD	Fisher Site (11W11), Illinois
1300 AD	Norris Farms 36, Illinois
1325-1350 AD	Crow Creek Site (39BF11), South Dakota
Late 1600's-Early 1700's AD	Larson Village; 1750-1785 Larson Site (39WW2), South Dakota

Table 4.1 Timeline of violent events in the Midwest and Southeast included in this discussion.

*900-1000 A.D. Consolidation, Defensive Features and Locations, Bufferzones:*

From AD 900-1000, some of the incipient Mississippian sites in the Southeast and Midwest begin to consolidate their settlements (Dye 2009:101). It appears that many of these individuals were moving to more naturally defense-oriented locations: such as high bluffs, or sites that were difficult to access because of waterways. Further, there were increases in human-made defensive constructions, including early palisade constructions and large ditch features that were also included as prominent site features (Dye 2009:101; Milner 2007). Ditch and palisade features were often used to slow attackers, as they would block the visibility of specific individuals, causing attackers to counter by aiming arrows upwards, which would injure random individuals. Attackers would sometimes light the arrows with fire and aim for structures that were frequently thatched.

Regional consolidation of archaeological sites can indicate that there were increasing outside pressures and/or increasing beneficial motivations for populations to live in more densely populated areas (Anderson 1994; DePratter 1983). For instance, protection resulting from the simple increase in number of individuals would be a key benefit of consolidation if outlying sites were subjected to frequent raids and attacks. David Anderson (2002) continues this discussion on settlement nucleation, adding details of how storage facilities and fortifications may correlate to centralized political organizations. Fortier and McElrath (2002) also discuss the relationship between nucleated settlements and the leadership it required. They point out that non-nucleated settlements do not seem to need as much leadership, because people do not have to protect shared goods, or services. Leadership positions would then distribute these goods and services, and would be responsible for this oversight. Robert Carneiro (1998)

discusses how in time, leadership positions could develop into permanent, hierarchical, and hereditary positions, especially when these roles are highlighted and strengthened by warfare activities.

The movements to more defensible and larger populated areas would produce bufferzones in some areas between sites (Anderson 1994, 2002; Dye 2009:101; De Pratter 1983:33; Keeley 1996:112). The buffered areas created a social cushion between warring populations. Bufferzones are archaeologically identified as empty space between competing sites. In the Southeast and Midwest A.D. 900-1000 there is little to no evidence of land/resource usage, such as settlement or hunting camps during extended periods of time. Archaeologists can reconstruct these bufferzones in locations where the settlement histories are fairly complete, and this can be further facilitated by physical delineations created by the construction of defensive features like palisades. Peter Dunham (1990) demonstrates the predictability of the size of bufferzones, and the location of site boundaries in segmented societies using a predictive gravity model. This would be a useful model to apply to the Mississippian sites to better understand the political, but not necessarily the cultural, boundaries that develop in areas with great inter-site competition.

Although the development of centralized site locations can indicate increasingly hostile atmospheres, this is not the only explanation for site growth, and is not a reasonable assessment of the formation and development of the Cahokia site. Despite the regional observations described above, Cahokia was not building its palisade at this time (Emerson and Pauketat 2010), and the populations at surrounding sites were growing (Alt 2010). To demonstrate that site growth is based on the regional consolidation, one would

anticipate that the surrounding sites shrink (i.e., the people are emigrating so we would expect them to delocalize as they moved out from their communities). As Susan Alt (2010) correctly notes, the communities that surrounded Cahokia did not shrink. In fact, some even prospered and grew based on recent population estimates (Alt 2010; Auerbach and Bissett 2010). This evidence does not support ideas that Cahokia developed because of regional pressures to consolidate, and we need to look outside Cahokia to find where populations traveled from to create this indigenous city. Some surely came from the south, from Caddo lands, but the questions remain, which populations aggregated to form Cahokia and why? It does not appear motivated by any “atmosphere of fear,” as the hinterlands remain in tact. Instead of imagining factors that push development toward Cahokia, it seems more as though people were being pulled into the site. Perhaps Cahokia represented a place of cultural exchange and ethnic distinction instead of current interpretations that it was focused on cultural assimilation. It began and ended with various populations aggregating, some potentially emigrating from the far south.

*1000-1050 A.D. Cahokia's Mound 72, Illinois:*

The early construction of Mound 72 dates to the Fairmount-Lohmann phase, AD 1000-1050 (Fowler et al. 1999; Goldstein 2000). At least 128 captive females were killed and interred in Mound 72 during this phase. This period also included the burial of remains from an emptied charnel house (Feature 219), three mass graves of killed females (Feature 204, 237) and the burial of the shell-bird personages (Features 101, 102, 103, and 104). Later, an additional mixed grave of thirty-nine individuals were violently killed and interred into the same mound (Feature 229). This burial accompanied

the burial of persons on litters and occurred at least 50-100 years after the first interments (Fowler et al. 1999; Goldstein 2000: 197), and resembles Feature 210 that was interred in a coetaneous event. During a period of time in between those events, 53 killed females (Feature 105), and four headless-handless males (Feature 106) were also interred in a centrally located position. These later interments from the Southwest portion of the mound were interred during the final mound stage period, around AD 1100 (Fowler et al. 1999:192). There was continued use of the mound following its final reshaping and capping, although these later burials are often thought of as non-related and intrusive (Goldstein 2000:197; Rose 1999). The entire Mound 72 mortuary complex was constructed over several generations, and therefore may include changes in meanings that were associated with the symbolic and actualized interments. Although we should not try to fit these details into a singular symbolical narrative, we should recognize and report those that we can identify.

One fact that we know about the earliest burials is that the majority of the killed females were from outside populations. This is known from their dental morphology demonstrating their bio-distance, and they also consumed a different diet from others included in the Mound 72 mortuary complex (Ambrose et al. 2003; Hedman 2006). Additionally, we know that these were young, reproductive females, which is a category often valued in the prehistoric Southeast and Midwest. However, *these* females were chosen by their captors for unknown reasons—it is likely that they were taken during a warfare event—and were killed. For reasons mentioned below and discussed in detail in chapters five and six, I do not think that *these* females were necessarily valued in same manner that females of Cahokian descent were valued. Even if they were symbolically

representing excess wealth, or the wives of hero-figures, it stands out that these were non-Cahokians killed and included into this mortuary complex. There is little reason to stretch the argument into a prestige-gaining mechanism in this case; it is likely they held little prestige themselves. Even if they were linked to the shell-bird burials, and that associated imagery, there is little reason to assume that this was a direct relationship, unless it is that the shell-bird burials were later linked to these female interments. They were spatially interred distantly in Mound 72 from the shell-bird burials, under separate submound structures, and were buried prior to the shell-bird burials.

Countering the prestige-gaining and valued models further as described by Rose (1999), these females were not all perfectly spaced while being positioned during interment; some appear extraneously added at the end of the burial ritual. This seems a little odd considering current interpretations that these individuals were included as part of a mythic tableau arrangement for demanding deities, where we might expect these mortuary performances to be practically perfect. This imperfection is particularly apparent in Feature 214, a burial that contained the remains of twenty-four females. This mass burial was orientated to the same 30 degree angle that the final mound shape followed, and therefore appears separate from nearby Feature 237 and 205 that also were mass female burials. Although none of these females were strewn into the pit in a chaotic manner, their burials were not completely planned in their arrangement as indicated by their spacing. Further, the Feature 214 burials were not in a sand-lined pit, like the other nearby mass graves, though it did continue the dual layer pattern. Rose notes (1999:68) “The first layer contained 13 and the upper layer 11 individuals. The bodies had been more closely spaced in the southeast end of the pit.” This supports theories that interpret

these burials as having been created and interred simultaneously or in short succession, as the structuring principles remained remarkably similar.

Additional features that makes these females who were interred in Mound 72 so unique as captives is that they were collectively captured and killed after being brought to the site, and there were no prepubescent nor middle-aged females interred with them. This tight age selection corresponds with reproductive years, and should not be dismissively viewed as coincidental. Also, there were very few instances of pathological stress that might point to slowed or otherwise distressed behavior that would make these females less desirable as captives for social-incorporation, as laborers, companions, adopted persons. Their relatively healthy dispositions contrast the victims found at Norris Farms 36, who were injured, or sickly when killed by assailants (Milner et al. 1991:587). The Mound 72 females were fairly healthy, with only some instances of *periostitis*, but these cases were minimal (Rose, continued personal communication), and seem to mostly come from one of the mass graves groups (group from Feature 237). This makes me wonder if the separate graves mark separate populations from where these females were taken captive. However, if these females were captured from a single population the result would be devastating for the reproductive success of that population, as many nearby settlements reasonably contained population sizes of 500-1500 individuals.

Paula Porubcan (2000) was correct in noting the links to ideas of expendable social capital and the display of regional power expressed in killing individuals who were potentially perceived as extraneous, but does not adequately address the issue of these females as non-local beyond seeing Cahokia as a dominant and clearly powerful community. She discusses how Cahokia was demonstrating its power over the outside

sites, but what about any reactions to these powerful Cahokians? Were there acts of retaliation? Were sites destroyed during raids to capture these females? This is especially interesting because warfare literature is filled with ideas of vengeance models of warfare and there is no known evidence that Cahokia was attacked before nor following this event. The palisade construction around the inner precinct of Cahokia began around AD 1150, at least 100-150 years post-dating the primary Mound 72 interments, and corresponding to the burning of the palisade at the East St. Louis Quarry site (Emerson and Pauketat 2010). The lack of immediate retaliation could be the reason that the literature states that these females were willing sacrifices or that their families gained prestige and honor from their deaths. Would outside females be able to gain the same status and prestige as insiders? Why would this be a goal?

Although the killed females relationship to the shell-bird burials was somewhat tangential—that is that these females were killed and arranged as part of a performance of cosmic tableau rather than as retainers or directly representing the power of any particular leader—this relationship remains an important image that was retained by some populations in their understandings of a love-hate relationship with the Thunderers and related deities. As with many supernatural figures, the Thunderbirds specifically, were beings that required respect and caused some social fear, as they would sometimes demand (or simply take) human lives. Their relationship with humans, although not perfect, provided safety for the people from beings that they feared more, such as the Underwater Jaguars (Lankford 1987).

In the distant (geographically and temporally) Blackfoot population, sacred bundles for Thunder, were characterized by this tenuous relationship between humans



and the sky-being Thunder. In discussing the symbols evoked in bundle ceremonies for Thunder as recorded by George Grinnell, Howard Harrod (1987) summarizes two associated traditions. The first tradition that Harrod summarized is relevant to this discussion, as it embodies the fearful piety that humans create while dealing with demanding deities. Harrod writes (1987:69), “The first tradition represents Thunder as an ambivalent character; he brings the rain which makes things grow, but he is also an inveterate stealer of women.” Here the female character is taken captive after Thunder incapacitates her husband. The husband is required to first gain power from the Raven Chief, who uses the sun, to overcome Thunder. Thunder concedes defeat, but demands that the people still revere him as he is the bringer of the rains. What is most revealing for this project, is the focus on Thunder as the stealer of women. In the legend, Thunder keeps only the eyes of the females he steals; coating his lodge walls with them. As with other Native American attacks, the husband was able to restore his wife after he manages to defeat Thunder and retrieve her eyes. The victory that the husband achieves over Thunder is not a permanent position, and it is clear by the continued reverence to Thunder that humans needed to maintain their rituals of respect for Thunder to ward off his captive-taking ways, and ultimately it was up to the human husband to be resourceful and borrow powers from other beings to mediate the demanding behaviors of Thunder. What is further encapsulated is the concept of renewal that is continued in the Blackfoot association with Thunder. If the Cahokians positioned themselves as the keepers of prominent social renewal rituals, this helps explain why they used widely recognized symbols of renewal in association with Mound 72.

Regardless if these females and their communities participated in trade or had

other economic or political relations with the population at Cahokia, they were selectively chosen and killed from populations that were distinctive from those performing these ceremonies. This reduces the likelihood that these females were willing to participate in these activities, and it is reasonable to think that these purposeful actions were performed with both secular and ideological goals in mind. For instance, the killing of females from outside communities could be an action to prevent future children from specific lineages, or simply to inhibit the production of future warriors, from being born into outside communities. Additionally, the children of these women (a few had been pregnant at some point based on pelvic stress markers) could have their lineage jeopardized in this likely matrilineal population (Lankford 1987). By killing these females their killers are essentially removing the kin-ties between child survivors and their mothers. The avuncular relationship although presumably significant in some of the child rearing practices, may not provide this benefit without the adoption the children by the killed females' sisters as opposed to adoption by their brothers' wives, as their own children would be associated to their mother's lineage, which is not the same matriline as the potential surviving children.

Further, if we assume that auto-sacrifice or allowing one's kin to be included in sacrifice rituals to attend a deceased leader may in some cases cause a family or kin group to gain prestige, I do not think that outside populations would gain as much (if any) compared to a local population, and leaders may have even demanded local participation, as in the Natchez case (Swanton 1911, 1946). My reasoning is as such, if the status one could potentially gain, individual or kin, was only acquired for the captor's community, and not the natal community, then it would not be a likely goal unless those individuals

interpreted as captives had kin who were trying to gain acceptance into that population.

Captive participants in prestige-gaining events may attempt to hedge their positions into obtaining as much prestige for their kin even when there is little chance that they will survive, but there is no way to know for certain if these females in Mound 72 were even attempting to gain prestige or status. They were not interred with any visible evidence of violence that could indicate that they were included in a torture based prestige-gaining situation. Defiance by captives in the face of torture is described in many captive narratives as a mechanism to gain status. This practice was often limited to male captives, although there is mention that females were also, at times, expected to maintain a defiant demeanor (Cole 2000; Demos 1994; Driver 1966). During these torture-prestige gaining interactions, the captives were expected to yell threats, and refuse submission to their captors, even when they were mutilated (limb removal sometimes occurred), and otherwise had pain inflicted. Interestingly, much of what we describe as likely evidence of longer term adoptions/captivity may not parallel to some Native American populations' beliefs where adopted individuals were often not mistreated and abused. Instead, adopted individuals were frequently treated with respect and care as they were adopted to carrying on the memory (and sometimes the spirit) of a deceased loved one (Gallay 2002; Hall 1997).

A spirit freed by death could not rest until another had been adopted to replace its loss, having assumed the name of the deceased. This view of adoption as the symbolic reincarnation of the dead is reflected in the Seneca's painting of the hair and skin of trophy scalps red as well as the faces of adopted prisoners. The scalps were adopted as "living relatives" symbolically equating them with a prisoner awaiting adoption and the status of the dead person being mourned (Hall 1997:33-35).

Further significant to discuss when dealing with death for prestige models, and at least among the Natchez (Swanton 1911, 1946), there seems to be an inclusion of the

ideas of how closely one is related to a leader and their potency as a participant in these lethal ceremonies. Upon the death of a significant person, such as a Sun, the spouse and others who knew ahead of time that they were meant to accompany the deceased in death, would feast, and participate in the the mourning performance enacted for the deceased individual. Not only would outsiders likely know little of the specifics involved in these rituals, their likely aversion to participate would not be viewed highly. The desire to gain prestige in a separate population from ones' own is likely less than the desire to increase prestige in one's natal community. So again, I am not wholly convinced that females brought into Mound 72 would have participated in the same way that a local member could and would perhaps even wish to participate. Although I see the eleven burials who were directly associated with the shell-bird burials to potentially fall into the category of retainer, if the shell-bird burials were not marking the chiefly or spiritually important status of these individuals, then these other individuals may not represent retainers at all, and in all likeliness, if they were sacrificed for anything, it would be more likely that they were sacrificed for some deity who perhaps would not care if those killed were from local or distant populations.

Some of the known Mississippian world is fairly quiet in terms of violent acts following these early events. This is what Pauketat (2004:124) describes as *Pax Cahokian*, and represents the period following the construction of Mound 72 until the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, when we can identify the burning of heavily fortified villages to the north in Aztalan, the Fisher Site, and at some sites in other parts of the Mississippian region as well, including the East St. Louis Quarry site. As the following evidence will show, this period of relative quiet did not last indefinitely, and actually was a seemingly short

punctuation to the typical raiding and warfare events in the American Bottom. Violent actions erupted at different locales at varying times after AD 1150.

*1150-1700 A.D. Aztalan, Wisconsin:*

Late 12<sup>th</sup> century Aztalan was a heavily fortified Mississippian site in eastern Wisconsin. The site was burned by Oneota raiders on several occasions. Here, large portions of the palisade, some houses, and a charnel house were all burned in several attacks. These repeated events demonstrate that this behavior was mostly endemic raiding events, and there was likely a lag time to allow for the resources being raided to build up again. The build up of resources could include allowing populations to recover demographically, as people are frequently a valued resource for numerous reasons including: as population members, as workers, as captives, as spiritual followers, as traders, *et cetera*.

There was further evidence of warring activities (as opposed to accidental burning of the village) in the skeletal trauma present at Aztalan. Butchered remains clearly indicate social unrest and violent encounters (Dye 2009:10-11), especially when found in conjunction with the burned village structures. Dye (2009) argues that the desecration of charnel houses or ancestral shrines was a high priority in attacks on mound centers in the Southeast and Midwest between about AD 1200-1700. This is also discussed by David Anderson (1994:80), who states that the “desecration of a rival society's temple, specifically its ancestral burials, was considered the ultimate insult and a primary goal in warfare.” Since these temples could house the fire shared between several *talwas* (Lankford 1987:54-56), the destruction of one fire, symbolically polluted the related

*talwas* as well, because they were all connected. Destruction of villages by fire would wholly consume the sacred fire with that of the profane. The *talwas* would require symbolic severance or cleansing to preventing hardships that resulted from polluted fires. The sacred fires were tended by specialized keepers who protected them from contamination and from being extinguished. In fact, the maintenance of the sacred fires was so imperative to the health and wellness of populations that the guardians were frequently assigned to tend the important fires in pairs so that the fire could be watched throughout the entire day and night. The fire itself was renewed during the first-fruits (green corn) ceremony. This ceremony is also known as a *poskita (busk)*, and is performed to reestablish the connections between communities who share a *talwa* (Lankford 1987:54-56).

Conflagration of temples or ancestor shrines frequently occurred along with the burning palisades and houses during warfare attacks (Dye 2009; Dye and King 2008). Introduction of the contaminating profane fire would disrupt the socially required renewal rituals at rival sites (Anderson 1994; DePratter 1993; Dye and King 2008:165; Sabo 1993:201). The idea of maintaining and avoiding the pollution of sacred fires remained a significant cultural feature in populations during the historic period. It is recorded in the oral accounts in many populations, including the Natchez oral accounts that contain ideas of illness for the entire group if the sacred fires were polluted or extinguished (Lankford 1987:54-57). The fire keeper responsible for accidentally allowing the fire to go out, and sneakily relighting it without knowledge by anyone else was portrayed as responsible for the illness and death that overcame the Suns.

It is also important to note that although Aztalan was virtually destroyed on

several occasions, its oscillation between destruction and rebuilding periods point to repeated raiding activities, not to attempted destruction of the population, as seen elsewhere (notably Crow Creek, South Dakota). Raiding, particularly if focused on plundering activities would help explain lapses in time between attacks. The lag times support ideas that raiders allow the villagers at Aztalan to restock storage supplies under peacemaking conditions.

*1150-1250 A.D. Orendorf Site, Illinois:*

Orendorf is a Middle Mississippian site located in West-Central Illinois. It was excavated throughout the 1970's by Lawrence Conrad, Thomas Emerson, and later by Sharron Santure (Conrad 1991:122, 132). The site itself was positioned by its Middle Mississippian occupants in an easily defensible location, on a high bluff. The population practiced a seasonally shifting diet that included: maize, deer, turkey, waterfowl, gourds, fish, and more. Conrad (1991:135) notes that there was a heavy reliance on maize, as it was present in approximately 150 of the 190 flotation samples and this maize-heavy diet is further supported by Jane Buikstra's analysis of C-13 values.

At Orendorf, 25 individuals (out of a sample of 268) had clear skeletal evidence of violent demise (Steadman 2008). Dawnie Wolfe Steadman (2008:51) reports the injury distribution as follows: thirteen were scalped, six were decapitated, five had healed cranial blunt force trauma, three had injuries from projectile point impacting the skeletal remains, and eight cases where projectiles were found with the bodies, but not embedded in the bones. This group of individuals was composed fairly equally of both males and females, and all were over fifteen years of age. This age profile, demonstrates that for the

most part, adolescents and children were spared from these attacks, or were buried separately from the adults.

As with other sites during the Mississippian cultural periods, Orendorf periodically rebuilt their palisade walls (Steadman 2008:52). The rebuilding of the palisade walls, could indicate that there was a persistent threat of violence for these villages. This continued threat of violence for the villages that could represent endemic warfare practices that were perhaps focused on killing those who ventured into the bufferzone, as the Orendorf site was not burned that would indicate a direct attack on the village. Also, as noted by Steadman (2008:61) this threat was realized by the victims she analyzed, but it is likely that these actualized events strengthen the perceived threat levels as well.

An interesting aspect of the Orendorf site is that these warfare events predate the Oneota expansion into the area. As Steadman (2008) notes, this shows that even prior to the arrival of Oneota populations, that the individuals in the American Bottom did participate in violent encounters that did not always relate directly to resource gains, nor were they focused on the destruction or annihilation of a village or population. Also, Steadman (2008:61) further notes, “the mortuary context does not indicate that any of the victims from the Orendorf mound were treated differently than others interred there, suggesting the victims were local citizens rather than captured enemies.”

#### *1150-1200 A.D. East St. Louis Quarry Site, Illinois:*

The construction of the East St. Louis Quarry Site, located to the southwest of Cahokia, was likely directly related to the construction of Cahokia. The locales of East St.



Louis Quarry Site, and the St. Louis Mound City have been described as a socio-political network of sites, or as described by Pauketat these form the “Central Political Complex of Cahokia.” Even with a less Cahokia-centric model (Milner 1998), the proximity and intentional visibility of the largest mounds between these sites, strongly indicated that there was social connection between these populations—even if these relationships were competitive, or possibly based on enmity. These three sites are prominent features on the landscape; each encompassing large spaces with their populations' focus on mound and palisade constructions, maintaining agricultural lands, some craft construction, and each site included habitation areas separate from public spaces.

The palisade walls at the East St. Louis Quarry Site were burned around AD 1150-1200. This is close to the time in which the palisade at Cahokia was initially constructed, and these may have been built for the same reason (Emerson and Pauketat 2010). Despite the assailants being unknown, the burning of the East Saint Louis Quarry Site palisade indicates that these were not solely symbolic structures. The palisades were indeed functional and at times used site features. Therefore, if there are symbolic meaning associated with their shapes, these meanings did not reduce the actualized role of the palisades as defensive features.

#### *1200-1250 A.D. Increases in Fortifications, and Pathological Evidence of Conflict:*

Regional increases in constructions of site fortifications: People living during this period participated in increasing the number of sites with fortifications that were likely a reaction to increasing vulnerability to raids and other attacks. Walls, bastions, and centrally located villages emerge (Anderson 1994; Dye 2009; Trubbit 2003). The changes

in site density/centralization patterns and the associated palisades would influence how accessible some individuals are to be targeted for capture or death. Those who live in the defensive features were more protected from attack than those who did not relocate.

As noted by Strezewski (2006:270): “In the central Illinois River valley, Mississippian palisaded settlements situated in defensive blufftop locations begin to be constructed after A.D. 1200 (Conrad 1991; Esarey and Conrad 1998; Ham 1978, 1994).” This demonstrates a renewed or new regional threat, and the general response was not to flee, but to consolidate and fortify. This could also indicate that the multi-ethnic Fisher population, which is discussed further in this chapter, wanted to maintain their control over particular resources or hunting lands that they shared, but were unwilling to relinquish these to their assailants.

Despite widespread efforts to ward off attackers, the fortifications, population consolidations, and otherwise increasingly defensive site strategies could not and did not protect everyone on an individual level, as evidenced by the capturing and incineration of the palisaded villages, their structures, and sometimes individuals at these sites. Additionally, individuals with pathological evidence of violent encounters have also been found throughout the region. Some are found within burnt village structures, while others exhibit evidence of scalping, decapitation, and limb removal.

Decapitations continue throughout the Mississippian period, but this is a behavior that also has been identified at earlier sites as well (Chacon and Dye 2007). Importantly, not all decapitations should be considered evidence of warfare. Some disembodied heads are the result of disturbances after burial, and can be accelerated if some time has passed between death and burial. However, when the cervical vertebrae are present with the

cranium, and especially with any signs of cut-marks, these strongly evidence intentional decapitations.

While the scalping of an individual is an obvious example of trophy taking, does the decapitation of an individual make that head a trophy? Not necessarily. This may only be the case if the head is then displayed. For example, there are many instances of headless individuals at the site of 1Lu25 (Perry Site) in northern Alabama, but that does not necessarily mean that all those heads were displayed. It is true that the decapitations clearly indicate that the headless individuals were made incomplete for a reason. But that reason could be that the individual was someone that was disgraced within the community or an enemy who was dispatched in a horrific manner but not displayed. However, a headless or limbless individual was disliked for some reason, and that dislike could have been translated into a gleeful and proud display of part of that person indicating that individual's demise. (Jacobi 2007:301)

Evidence of “trophy-heads” and other “trophy-limbs” are present from many pre-Mississippian sites. This practice was also documented during the early European explorations in the New World. Of note are the engravings by Theodore de Bry, based on the works of Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues. These familiar images include images of trophy limbs as displayed on poles, and as they are being removed from the bodies of these individual victims. An essential note about these engravings, is that they were constructed based on first accounts and images, and that Theodore de Bry never set foot in the Americas (Milanich 2005). Also, instances of cannibalism and other “exotic” behaviors may have been added to these engravings to fit the buyer's taste. This does not mean that these engraved images are valueless, only that as with the writings of the chroniclers and explorers they require us to examine them critically, and to incorporate carefully into our cultural reconstructions. For instance, even without these images, the archaeological record supports bodily trophy examples from all over the globe, including the prehistoric periods in the New World (Chacon and Dye 2007; Martin and Frayer 1997; Seaman 2007). The earliest known decapitation and forearm trophy taking is from the Late Archaic Robinson Site (40SM4), Smith County, Tennessee (Smith 1993).

Trophy-taking practices continued with seemingly high rates in the historic period. José Rabasa notes (2000:146-147), “mutilation of the deceased and the refusal to bury was a banal punishment.”

*1200 A.D. Dickson Mounds, Illinois:*

The Dickson Mounds in Illinois are located north of Cahokia, in Fulton County Illinois. The Mississippian occupation of the Dickson Mounds site extended from AD 1100-1275. During the 1966-69 salvage archaeology of this site, a mound was excavated that contained the remains of four apparently sacrificed, male individuals—all four were decapitated. Above these males, the mound was reopened on several occasions, and more individuals of various ages and sexed as both male and female were interred. Unlike the males below there was no evidence suggesting that their deaths were socially induced (Hall 2000:248).

The four males interpreted as killed were decapitated. In place of their crania lay four ceramic headpots; the contents of these pots are unknown. These males also were interred with interlocking arms, and closely resemble Feature 105 at Cahokia's Mound 72. Unlike the foursome in Mound 72, these at Dickson Mounds did not have their hands removed in addition to their heads. Robert Hall (1997, 2000) has extensively explored and outlined the links between these Mayan and Pawnee beliefs. Hall links these to Green Corn rituals (*busk*), Skiri-Pawnee Morning Star sacrifices and to Mesoamerican sacrificial practices to the corn goddess, Xilonen (Hall 2000). These ceremonies are strongly associated with fertility, as well as earth and fire renewal.

Robert Hall (2000:249) describes how the bodies of the decapitated males were

used as a platform, called a Divine Hearth, for the immolation of subsequent sacrifices. Along with the male decapitations, rituals also included the immolation of individuals in the space above the males. Several rituals of immolation could be performed with one human platform. An interesting observational feature that Hall (2000) notes is that although the individuals who were immolated were perceived as female, that males were also sacrificed in these rituals. Through these rituals they could obtain female identities. This fluid sense of gender identity should be kept in mind in research of Mississippian communities, as it likely present in other ritual performances, and possibly even in iconographic representations.

*1250-1300 A.D. Larson Village, West-Central Illinois:*

Following the abandonment of Orendorf, the Larson site was constructed during AD 1250- 1300 range. Lawrence Conrad (1991:141) notes that “The Larson site is a rectangular, stockaded settlement aligned with the winter solstice and covering approximately eight hectares on the bluff overlooking the confluence of the Spoon and Illinois Rivers.” Compared to other sites during the Mississippian, the Larson site was to an extent seasonally occupied with a large portion of the population leaving the site during the spring and summer months (Conrad 1991:143; Harn 1978:252).

Of interest to this discussion, the remains of a minimum of ten individuals were found burned in a midden area of Larson Village. Of these individuals, several have pathological evidence of at least four scalped individuals (Carter et al. 1998 in Steadman 2008). These fragmented remains, were burned. There were twenty-four other individuals associated with a cemetery at the site. None of the individuals buried in the cemetery

exhibited evidence of violence, leading Carter et al. (1998) to interpret the fragmented, midden remains as captives. It is essential to note that although these individuals were perhaps captives, the terms of their captivity are lost. There is no information about the length of their captivity, where they were from, or why they were taken captive in the first place. An alternative explanation was that these were villagers who were killed and scalped by a different population. Later, the remains were recovered and interred by the Larson Village population. Unless there were clear distinctions between these ten individuals that biodistance them from the remainder of the Larson Village population, there is too little to go on to support ideas that they were captives.

*1200-1300 A.D. Moundville, Alabama:*

There is evidence of population consolidation and palisade constructions at the lush ecological zone at Moundville, in the Black Warrior Valley, Alabama (Knight and Steponaitis 1998). Warfare is primarily evidenced during the Moundville phases I and II (Knight and Steponaitis 1998:15; Powell 1991; Steponaitis 1998; Walthall 1980:216; Welch 1991) and is limited. This evidence includes a few indications of pathological stress on the osteological remains of three individuals; portable artifact evidence (i.e., the remains of potential weapons); changes in regional settlement patterns with focuses on consolidation and defense; and the construction of defensive architecture surrounding settlements (Knight and Steponaitis 1998:15; Powell 1991; Steponaitis 1974, 1998; Walthall 1980:216; Welch 1991). All of the above data have been used by researchers to support arguments of endemic warfare at Moundville. The five kilometer palisade with 125 bastions was constructed around AD 1200. This palisade was rebuilt in several

episodes, and may indicate that there was a constant threat of attack that this population was trying to reduce or mediate. The regional consolidation argument has been used in both Southwest and Southeastern data sets, declines in settlement clusters and increased distance between defensive structures have been interpreted as an indication of increasing regional conflict (Anderson 1994, 2002; Dye 2009; Ferguson 1990a, 1990b, 1997; Le Blanc 1997; Trubbit 2003). In the Southeast, this consolidation coupled with defensive palisades and moats, has allowed for interpretations of larger social violence, despite sometimes scanty osteological data (Knight 1986; Knight and Steponaitis 1998).

There is a significant gap in the osteological data that indicates that if there were larger social violence events between Moundville phases I and II they are not represented in the osteological evidence from Moundville. Although palisades were continuously rebuilt during Moundville phases I and II, and there is substantial iconographic indications that warfare was important, there is only a little evidence of warfare from the skeletal remains at Moundville during this period. Three adult individuals, out of 564, were violently killed (Bridges 1991; Bridges et al. 2000; Powell 1991; Jacobi, 2007). This is strange because other than one instance of a piercing wound and total of three individuals with cut marks, no other individuals appeared to be involved in any form of violence (Larsen 1997:128). This could mean that the palisades served their purpose, or that the individuals wounded by warfare activities were buried outside Moundville. However, this clearly marks different activity from that which occurred at Mound 72, Cahokia 150-200 years earlier.

Associated with this period, there was an increase in the iconographic depictions of disembodied skulls and limbs on pottery found at Moundville. These are many pots

that are covered with these, and other warrior imagery known in Mississippian cultures (Galloway 1989; Reilly and Garber 2007). As noted by David Dye (2009:7), iconographic images are indirect evidence of periods of social conflict, and can be used to suggest that warfare was possible and even probable in areas where there are many artifacts of this type. However, the lack of osteological evidence should not be overlooked for the Moundville site. Until more remains are found, the level and type of violence at Moundville cannot be adequately assessed even with palisades and weaponry.

*1225-1330 A.D. Fisher Site (11W11), Illinois:*

This is a site located in Will County Illinois, which is located to the southwest of present day Chicago. The Fisher Site was originally excavated by George Langford during the late 1920's, and was recently re-evaluated by Michael Strezewski (2006). The occupation of Fisher has been radiocarbon dated to span from A.D. 1000 to 1450 with the majority of dates falling within the A.D. 1200 to 1350 period (Jeske 2003:167).

Temporally speaking, the pertinent events at Fisher occurred after the cultural peak at Cahokia, and while this large regional center was undergoing depopulation. It was included in this overview for several reasons, including: the Fisher site population appears multi-ethnic; it is evidenced that a large attack on this population resulted in the death of at least forty individuals; and the site was burned on at least one occasion, which was a widely used warfare tactic by Mississippians and other indigenous American populations (Milner 2007; Milner et al. 1991; Strezewski 2006).

During his excavations at the Fisher site, Langford (1928:10) discovered approximately fifty domestic structures associated with the mounds. Nearly all of these



structures were burned. This pattern is similar to that at Atzalan (Bamforth 1994:102; Keener 1999: 785; Owsley and Berryman 1975; Owsley et al. 2007; Willey and Emerson 1993), and could indicate a hostile attack on the village. Along with the osteological evidence of scalping, these data support Strezewski's interpretation of a larger village attack, rather than the cumulative result of raids like those at Norris Farms 36 (Milner and Smith 1990; Santure et al. 1990). Further evidencing regional hostility, are the data that support that the population is not a homogenized grouping, and the site was shared by at least two distinct groups who did not typically share site locations. The contemporaneous presence of both Langford and Fisher style artifacts support theories of a multi-ethnic population at the Fisher Site. Strezewski (2006) interprets these as evidence that outside social pressures (i.e., warfare directed by other nearby populations) caused these distinct ethnic groups to share the Fisher Site location out of necessity and the sharing of a common enemy. The interpretation of sharing a common enemy has been used to describe the multi-ethnic appearance at other sites in the Eastern Woodlands (Strezewski 2006).

Strezewski (2006) compares the burial groups from three out of the original twelve mounds at Fisher. In total, George Langford excavated 603 burials, with 348 being associated to East and West Mounds. The mounds included in Strezewski's (2006) analysis were East Mound, West Mound and South-Southwest Mound. East Mound yielded two individuals, eight were from West Mound and at least forty partially disarticulated individuals had been excavated from the South-Southwest Mound. However, as explained by Strezewski (2006), "With two exceptions, all victims of violence in the big mounds were fully articulated, suggesting that most were killed near

or in the village and their bodies were quickly recovered.” Since the forty individuals were in a less articulate status, Strezewski (2006) assumes that they took longer to recover, but were not left out for an extraordinary length of time.

Strezewski (2006) notes how there were very few crania available in the collections from East and West Mounds for him to study. Eight out of the nine available crania were used in this analysis, and were from five females, two males, and one subadult around nine years old. The lack of crania is a result of the focus of archaeological research during the 1920-40s, when George Langford was excavating these mounds. Human remains were not perceived as containing the same amount of important cultural information that non-human artifacts could provide. Therefore, it was not just the pot-hunters who largely disregarded human remains, but the archaeologists as well.

By comparing these three mound groups, Strezewski was able to detect a pattern of small, low-intensity raiding that was followed by a larger, high-intensity conflict. He presents the low intensity events at the Fisher Site as similar to those at Norris Farms 36, but views the history of violence at Fisher as marking a different pattern from endemic raiding behaviors. A striking distinction, involves the larger attack that included the victims buried in the South-Southwest Mound. This indicates that somehow the circumstances and relationships between the Fisher site population and their attackers shifted.

The South-Southwest Mound individuals displayed evidence of scalping, but neither of decapitation nor other limb removal. As with the later Crow Creek site, these individuals were left out for some unknown period of time prior to burial. Importantly,

the remains from the Fisher site were partially articulated; the bodies were not skeletonized on the surface, as there is no evidence of rodent gnawing, and these bodies were mostly articulated. A further interesting note about the demographic composition of the approximately forty individuals interred in the South-Southwest Mound was that it was mostly females interred in this mass grave (Strezewski 2006).

*1300 A.D. Norris Farms 36, Illinois:*

Located on the 5,000 acre Norris Farms land, this site was excavated in the early 1980's under FAI-270 project. This site is associated with the post-Mississippian, Bold Counselor Oneota population. This change in population was marked by changes in grave orientation (Harn 1980; Milner and Smith 1990:69). Approximately sixteen percent (43 individuals) of the 264 found individuals at Norris Farms had experienced violent episodes in their lives. There were eighteen males, and roughly an equal number of females. Of the forty-three individuals who displayed evidence of violence, fourteen were identified as scalped, and eleven were decapitated. These actions are strongly associated with warfare activities. Interestingly, at least some of these individuals were sickly when they were killed. So even if they died because of warfare practices, they were likely those left near or at the site during an attack, because they could not easily flee.

Milner and Smith (1990) found evidence of both non-venereal treponemal infections and tuberculosis in the Norris Farms population. Making the situation more dismal for the victims is that in addition to disease related pathological indicators, some of these individuals were otherwise injured. Milner et al. (1991:587) write that, “many of the people who were killed were experiencing some form of disability when they were

attacked. These conditions included several affecting mobility: long-standing shoulder and hip dislocations; ribs with fractures showing an active bone response; and deformed, asymmetrical femoral heads. Others were suffering from infections that affected bone.” In other words, they were noting that those who were already sick or injured were much easier to capture and kill at this site. George Milner, Eve Anderson, and Virginia Smith (1991) describe this trauma as evidence of endemic warfare, based on the demographic profile and time passed between multiple events (Santure et al. 1990). To further support this idea, Milner and Smith (1990) compare the presence of diseased bones to those that displayed socially caused trauma, and found that there was indeed a statistically important correlation.

Further supporting the idea of endemic warfare, or raiding activities, as the primary interpretation is that this cemetery is not composed of a series of mass graves that could indicate that all victims were killed during a singular event. Most graves held one to only a few individuals lending support to the idea that there were multiple instances of attack. The presence of single to only a few individuals per grave would not be evidence alone, as some Mississippian populations did use corporate burial patterns that would often include the processing and/or saving of multiple individuals for simultaneous burials (Goldstein 1980; Hall 1997; Santure et al. 1990); however, there were also no signs that the site was burned nor were there any other evidence of a large scale, high-intensity (Strezewski 2006) attack on Norris Farms 36. Also, mass graves can result when populations experience epidemics of which they are susceptible, or are victims of natural disasters. The one mass grave present contained five decapitated individuals (Milner and Smith 1990:73). These burials (265, 266, 267, 268, and 269)

were interred as a group. Burial 267 had a remnant arrowhead lodged in thoracic vertebrae.

The population success model presented by Milner et al. (1991:595-596) is based on flight versus alliance-formation. Milner et al. (1991) saw land availability and social pressures as restricting the Oneota's ability to easily move to another location. If this Oneota population was forming alliances with other autonomous nearby populations, these alliances were not successful in preventing subsequent attacks by their assailants, as clearly evidenced by the repeated raids on the Norris Farms 36 village.

*1325-1350 A.D. Crow Creek Site (39BF11), South Dakota:*

Nearly five-hundred early Arikara were killed while palisades were being rebuilt at the Crow Creek Site. The discovery of the burial of at least 486 individuals, in 1978, has changed understandings of violence, warfare, and social interactions in the prehistoric populations along the Missouri River in South Dakota (Bamforth 1994; Willey and Emerson 1993; Zimmerman et al. 1981). Forensic and archaeological analyses of the skeletal remains of these individuals demonstrate that individuals were victims of a shared violent episode during the Initial Coalescent occupation of Wolf Creek Village. Prior to this larger village attack and the destruction of this population, some of the killed individuals may have been involved in other violent events as indicated by the healing of older wounds consistent with the pathological indicators of physical attacks (Willey and Emerson 1993).

Furthermore, the forensic research also revealed that many individuals had clear indications of human-induced mutilation of their bodies (Zimmerman 1997; Zimmerman

et al. 1981). This mutilation of bodies frequently included the scalping of crania, and removal of pubic hair that is evident on some of the victims remains through specific cut-mark patterns that are easily recognized by trained eyes. Sharp, straight cut marks that have no indication of newly woven (i.e., healing) bone matrix can at times indicate that the individual was scalped or otherwise cut during their death or shortly thereafter (Symes et al. 2002). These are readily distinguished from marks created by taphonomic processes (Haglund and Sorg 2002; Milner et al. 2000; Schiffer 1996); including root damage, insect destruction, and markings that are characteristic of carnivore gnawing (rounded pierce marks that often feature paired tooth marks). Old wounds are dull, and match the color of the rest of the bone surface whereas recent breaks and scrapes and damage from resulting from discovery and excavations are bright, again these are easily recognizable for trained eyes. The scalping and other trophy taking mutilations were clearly ancient.

Also evident in the Crow Creek data set, was that some time had passed between the death and burial. The remains were greatly disarticulated when discovered, and some displayed obvious indications that carnivores gnawed on them prior to burial (Willey et al. 1997:516; Zimmerman et al. 1981). For instance, small bones like metacarpals were often absent, and some of the long bones had identifiable tooth marks. The exact length of time that passed between death and burial is unknown. However, since there was time spent gathering and burying these individuals who were left on the surface by their killers, suggests that survivors or relatives of the victims were responsible for their burial (Zimmerman 1997:82-83). There were people who cared to see these remains interred; otherwise it is likely that they would have been left exposed at the surface and rapidly

decay. Additionally, the presence of a variety of bone types is further suggestive of non-enemies participating in the burial of these killed people, where great care was taken to collect the decomposing body parts of individuals. Compare to the Crenshaw, Arkansas site. The Caddoan Crenshaw site contained the crania and mandibles of over 350 killed non-local individuals (Barbara Burnett personal communication 2010; Early 2009). These individuals were decapitated; some were only represented by their mandibles that were included in these communal burials. These foreigners were likely killed at a large distance from Crenshaw site, explaining, at least in part, the limited selection of body parts that would be easier to transport. These crania and mandibles were then buried in their own designated areas at the site.

There are competing narratives of who was responsible as perpetrators of the brutal event at Crow Creek (Zimmerman 1997). What is clear is that it was enacted in a single episode that corresponded to the rebuilding of the defensive palisade. This period of rebuilding would leave the village vulnerable to attack. Men, women, children, and the elderly were all included as victims in the attack, and individuals from all these categories were mutilated. This demonstrates that this population was not solely involved in raiding focused on the goal of obtaining captives, even for adoption rituals, although this may have occurred to a degree with this population (Willey et al. 1997:517). Captive taking for adoption purposes is where women and children could potentially be taken as viable members or symbolic substitutes for deceased members of the attacking population (Dye 2009; Hall 1997). There is a prevalent concept of soul-displacement, and the captive individuals would become bodies in which to replace souls. However, instead of assuming that young females were taken captive in this example, we need to remember

that it is just as likely that the young males stayed back and fought to give the young females a chance to flee. This could help explain the demographic differences noted in Willey et al. (1997:517), either situation is plausible and likely.

Additionally evident from the forensic analysis was that many individuals had died from cranial trauma wounds caused by striking. This mode of death was evidenced by circular and ellipsoid depressions (Zimmerman et al. 1981:169). Most individuals, regardless of age or biological sex, were scalped, and nearly twenty-five percent of the population was decapitated (Willey et al. 1997). Many, also regardless of age or biological sex, were further dismembered—hands, feet and heads were removed from some individuals, though it was unclear how many were the result of the perpetrators versus decay, natural disarticulation and scavenging prior to burial. Other forms of mutilation involved the removal of facial features, including the nasal areas that were occasionally cut in patterns consistent with the removal of the nose; some teeth were forcibly removed; and tongues were removed (Willey and Emerson 1993; Willey et al. 1997:515) “Tongue removal, decapitation, and dismemberment of the Crow Creek victims may have been based on standard aboriginal butchering practices developed on large game animals” (Willey and Emerson 1993:259). This comparison to game dismemberment is particularly pertinent to these discussions, as it relates to the dehumanization of the killed individuals as a collective group. As Rowan Savage (2006) discusses, there is a link between zoomorphic characterizations of disliked populations and genocidal events, as it allows for groups to socially-distance themselves from those they kill. Regardless if this relationship is constructed to target and isolate those portrayed as vermin, or in a hunter-prey relationship, these constructions enable and even



encourage dehumanization ideologies.

The presence of longer-term nutritional stress is indicated through the analysis of the osteological remains of some of individuals recovered from the site. Particularly, cranial lesions and porotic hyperostosis and orbital pitting may suggest that these individuals suffered from nutritionally poor diets, and some may have experienced some B12 deficiencies and/or iron-deficiency anemia near the time of their death (Walker et al. 2009). These pathological stress markers do not alone indicate poor diets, they could indicate that nutritional absorption was inhibited (if the diet was adequate). However, dietary deficiencies were likely in this case, because Harris Lines were additionally revealed on the radiographs (Zimmerman 1985), and many individuals also exhibited linear dental enamel defects. Specifically, these individuals experienced disruptions in the growth of tooth enamel (hypoplasia), caused by periods of ceased, or severely reduced, tooth growth in their early childhood. Hypoplastic bands are strong evidence of prolonged childhood dental growth disruption events. Taken together, these data are suggestive of life-long dietary deficiencies that were extensive enough to inhibit bone and enamel growth. Since these pathological indicators were identified on both children and adults, age-grade nutritional restrictions like those seen at Moundville, Alabama (Powell 1991) are not suitable as an explanation for Crow Creek

The evidence of prolonged nutritional stress in conjunction with the massacre led Zimmerman and Bradley (1986) to conclude that the underlying motivation for the massacre was resource stress and population competition based on the reduced availability of lands as horticultural practices expanded. Nutritional motivation can sometimes be difficult to reconstruct and should be used cautiously. Difficulties can arise

because often people do not realize that their diet is not adequate, or as in modern cases, food preferences can sometimes lead to unhealthy dietary choices (at least on the individual level). Food shortages on the other hand, are often recognizable in populations, and can leave physical evidence, particularly in the dental remains of individuals. Food shortages affect large portions of the population simultaneously. Not only are food shortages sometimes evidenced in the osteological remains, but also are included in oral accounts from many populations. These accounts often discuss how to remedy these events, sometimes through spiritual mediation, or with the assistance of cultural-heroes. Maybe these villages were killed for whatever resources they had in storage; although, I would imagine that there were few resources stored if they were visibly suffering through a food shortage. Attackers are not as likely to sack a village that was not starved for resources, unless their hostilities went beyond nutritional. Also, perhaps the malnutrition experienced at Crow Creek was caused by earlier raiders.

Zimmerman and Bradley (1986) also suggest that this event may have been enacted by nearby populations that would include relatives, alluding to crimes of passion and violence to increase the plausibility of these events by individuals who knew the victims. The Crow Creek example is an important study to include in this project because it demonstrates the complexity of violence at prehistoric sites. Although the direct motivations at Crow Creek are obscure, what is demonstrable from these data is that there were likely multiple overlapping causes for the destruction of the Crow Creek site and its people. Even if some of the women were taken as captives that does not preclude that this event may have included ideas of population eradication, or “ethnic cleansing” (Pauketat 2004:157). We cannot simply assume that the lines between types of violence are clear

and discrete, but rather there is slippage and gaps as these behaviors are enacted.

*Late 17<sup>th</sup> -Early 18<sup>th</sup> Century Larson Village; 1750-1785 Larson Site (39WW2), South Dakota:*

The final site included in this overview is focused on the violent events from the historic period Arikara site, called Larson, located in Walworth County, South Dakota. This site is not to be confused with the Mississippian period Larson Site in the Central Illinois River Valley, discussed earlier by Lawrence Conrad (1991) and Alan Harn (1978).

Larson site (39WW2) is included to demonstrate that the episodic warfare pattern that included the destruction and immolation of villages that was experienced by the Mississippian populations continued on the Northern Plains well into the historic period. This pattern removes not only the population but also may symbolically destroy connections between the attacked village and other villages that may have shared social ties. As mentioned earlier, the immolation of villages did not simply destroy the domestic and civil structures of a communities, it is a powerful symbolic action for populations living in the Southern Plains, and may have been symbolically important in the Northern Plains as well. The social mediation is clearly outlined in the oral traditions that encode warnings about this symbolic pollution (Lankford 1987:54-57; Wright and Dirks 1983). As discussed previously, two fire attendants were assigned in the Natchez fire temple to guard against pollution and to prevent the fire from being extinguished (Lankford 1987:54-57).

Evidence from the Larson Site in South Dakota demonstrates that a large attack occurred on this fortified settlement in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. This type of attack is related

to episodic patterns of warfare, which are distinctly recognizable from the periodic, endemic warfare patterns (Deitrick 1980; Milner et al. 1991). Here, instead of having an accumulation of a few killed individuals per event as indicated with grave number and composition ratios (Milner et al. 1991), a large trench and pit burials that contain the remains of more than three killed individuals is found, which can be classified as a mass grave. To clarify, similar to the Fisher site in Illinois, the attacks on Larson Village (39WW2) appear to have a final, larger attack, as opposed to many smaller scale raids (Strezewski 2006). This larger scale village attack caused the mortuary assemblage to develop similarly to the assemblages at Aztalan, and Fisher, rather than like the longer-term aggregation of remains at Norris Farms 36 that would result from endemic warfare (Dye 2009; Dye and King 2008; Milner and Smith 1990; Santure et al. 1990; Strezewski 2006).

Dating to the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century, 61 individuals were found partially disarticulated among the burnt structures at Larson Village. Further analysis revealed that some of these individuals were scalped, decapitated, or otherwise mutilated by limb-removal practices. These activities are consistent with other Plains warfare patterns (Dye 2009:10-11; Dye and King 2008), and potentially represent the obtainment of trophies. Trophies are hugely important symbols that are utilized to demonstrate power and prowess in hunting and in battles.

The pattern of warfare behavior from the Larson Site in South Dakota was markedly different from the ambush and raiding style described for much of the Eastern Woodlands. This could simply mark a distinction between strategies used on the Northern Plains from those used eastward, or it could mark distinctions in the goal of each attack.

Archaeological and osteological studies have consistently shown that most acts of interpersonal violence in the prehistoric Eastern Woodlands can be characterized as low intensity, involving small-scale ambushes and raids of varying frequency, rather than large-scale campaigns and all-out assaults against villages. Low intensity warfare involved a pattern of hit-and-run tactics and opportunistic killings that most often resulted in the death of no more than a few individuals during each engagement (Bridges 1996; Hudson 1976:239-257; Milner 1999; Milner and Smith 1990) and frequently took the form of ambushes that offered the greatest likelihood of success with the least risk to the attackers. Numerous ethnohistoric sources acknowledge that this type of "skulking" warfare was favored among Native American groups in the Eastern Woodlands (Hudson 1976:239-257; Malone 1991; Swanton 1946) and that Europeans were often frustrated by the fact that Native Americans (whether allies or enemies) refused to fight in the open (Malone 1991; Starkey 1998:26). Though the frequency of prehistoric interpersonal violence appears to have varied considerably in both space and time, in some cases, prolonged low-level sniping at an enemy group could have had significant cultural and demographic impacts on a population (Milner 1999:117). These were wars of harassment, terror, and revenge, rather than conquest and occupation. (Strezewski 2006:249-250)

As Strezewski (2006:250-251) continues, he notes that although it may appear that the pattern shifted to one that included "massacres" that are typical in episodic violence, that this may be an archaeological blind spot. That is to say that as noted in ethnohistoric reconstructions and as evidenced archaeologically by disarticulated bodies (Owsley et al. 2007; Strezewski 2006; Willey and Emerson 1993), victims were sometimes left out for unknown lengths of time prior to burial. It is reasonable to assume that not all were located for burial, and in other cases they were indefinitely left out to the elements. Remains would eventually weather and erode, leaving no evidence of the events.

## **Summary and Discussion**

The intensity of violence at locations included in this overview for the Midwest and Southeast demonstrating the wide variability in these actions. Although some of the differences in patterns of violence and warfare are more than likely contingent on the situation and are culturally mediated, some could point to differences in the goal of the behavior when cautiously contextualized. In other words, the patterns evident in these

# SITES, DESCRIPTIONS, AND CATEGORIES OF VIOLENCE

<u>Sites Included</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Descriptive Features/Characteristics</u>	<u>N</u>
Cahokia's Mound 72, Illinois	episodic, religious	rapid, sacrifice, mythic tableau, captives	160
East St. Louis, Illinois	unknown	palisade is burnt	?
Aztalan, Wisconsin	endemic	palisade is burnt, series of attacks	?
Orendorf Site, Illinois	endemic	25/268 evidence violence, young adults killed	25
Dickson Mounds, Illinois	episodic, religious	4 individuals, killed and decapitated	4
Larson Village, West-Central Illinois	episodic	midden burial, scalplings, burnt remains, captive	10
Moundville, Alabama	unknown; personal	3/564 evidence violence, large palisade, scalplings	3
Fisher Site (11W11), Illinois	endemic shifts to episodic	begins with smaller attacks included in East (2) and West (8) Mounds, escalating later and included in the South-Southwest Mound (40+)	50
Norris Farms 36, Illinois	endemic, longer term	aggregated from multiple attacks, earlier wounds/attacks, some disarticulation of bones	43
Crow Creek Site (39BF11), South Dakota	endemic shifts to episodic	rapid, widespread malnutrition, earlier wounds/attacks, disarticulated bones, scalping, likely trophy-taking	486
Larson Village; 1750-1785 Larson Site (39WW2), South Dakota	episodic	disarticulated bones, burnt remains, scalping, limb trophy-taking	61

Table 4.2 Sites, descriptions, and categories of violence included in the discussion in this chapter. N = number of identified victims.

activities may indicate or hint at the prevailing motivations for specific attacks by demonstrating the frequency and intensity of interactions between populations. For example, differences between endemic and episodic modes of violent interactions can be indicative of raiding versus non-raiding behaviors. Norris Farms 36 appears to have been continually attacked in a behavioral style best associated with raiding practices. The smaller scale (fewer casualties) and less destruction to the site allowed survivors to return to their daily lives in a relatively short period of time. Furthermore, the time present between events encourages storehouses and people to replenish; both being important resources. As noted by Strezewski (2006), the interactions between populations can shift from endemic raiding to more episodic and disruptive forms of violence. This was identifiable when temporally contextualized, and indicates that these relationships intensified at the locations in question. There is the potential for raiding events to intensify, or to exhibit rotating patterns in the scale (Blick 1988; Shankman 1991). This is particularly true if there is a shift in the motivation or differences in how the event plays out (i.e., a change in the reaction to the behavior). However, the prehistoric instances of violence are greatly varied in the New World. In cases like Norris Farms 36 (Milner et al. 1991) the evidence of the behavior only indicates patterns of raiding—never visibly transforming nor intensifying into Strezewski's (2006:264-265) “final attack.”

The lines between forms and type of violence are not always clear, as demonstrated in several of the above examples. This concept extends to the religiously motivated violence that can overlap with warfare patterns, including those that appear genocidal. This was actually a little surprising to me, as I entered this dissertation project with the goal of elucidating clear lines of distinction between forms of violence. I was

convinced that I would be able to identify and isolate variable forms of violence from massacres, warfare, genocidal behaviors, interpersonal, and even religious sacrifices. These were only tangentially obtainable. What I found is that these patterns are discernible in the extreme forms and only after they had been enacted and continued for some time; even then the contemporaneous politics played such a large role in the interpretations and descriptions of these events that they were differentially viewed, reported, and interpreted.

Symbolic relationships between populations, including the virility and potency of these interactions were increased by the distance between these groups. As populations ventured beyond their domed construction of reality (Bailey 1995), they encountered the unknown and the supernatural (Sabo 2010, personal communication). Returning with evidence of these encounters in the form of scalp-locks and trophy limbs supported not only the claims made by warriors, but allowed for these events to become encoded into myths and legends. The items were the supernatural, powerful symbols of successful encounters with the unknown. They were not always directly included into the oral accounts, but were changed, merged, and exaggerated as they were embedded and transmitted.



## **--CHAPTER FIVE--**

### **CASE STUDY: CAHOKIA AND THE MIDDLE MISSISSIPPIAN BURIALS IN MOUND 72**

There are several reasons that Cahokia was chosen as a case study for this project. First, the extensive archaeological research at Cahokia has yielded a large database of material culture. These data have enabled the continual development of new interpretations in iconographic representations, population size and arrangements, bioarchaeological reconstructions of the populations living at the site, and these interpretations stem-out into the larger regional patterns. As the largest socially complex prehistoric site north of Mexico, there has long been much attention afforded to research on Cahokia providing a rich body of literature. Second, the Mound 72 burial group contains the differential burials of over 260 individuals, many of whom were killed. Not all of the burial features have been excavated, so the actual number of individuals and range in burials in Mound 72 is not fully known. However, there are several demographic and treatment distinctions that are visible in the excavations and analyses of these burials that are discussed throughout this chapter. Third, previous research has demonstrated that some of the females were brought into the Cahokia site apparently for the primary purpose of their killing and inclusion into the mound, or perhaps their inclusion was primarily intended for use in an afterlife by others who were interred the Mound 72 burial population. Paula Porubcan (2000) sees the captivity and killing of these foreign females as display of power by the elites at Cahokia, through their disposal of excess women from the hinterlands. I add that although Cahokia's elites may have been displaying these

females as disposable capital that their intentional selection from a biologically distinct population requires further study. It is also important that the killed female groups, the killed male foursome, and the mixed male/female groups are explored in detail as they were not treated as a monolithic group by the Cahokians, as evidenced by separate modes of death and burial. The importation of females who were distinct from the Cahokia population at large is an interesting feature that merits a lengthy discussion separate from this chapter, for this reason the discussion is continued in chapter six.

This chapter begins with a brief history and description of the location and geologic setting at the Cahokia site. This is followed by group level burial descriptions constructed based on burial type, as opposed to the assumed status categories. This is then followed by a summary of what scholars have been thinking about in regards to Mississippian period warfare and violent interactions, as interpreted with a focus on the Mound 72 data. Though I begin to address the interpretive problems in defining and using status categories to explain the differential burial patterns in Mound 72, the bulk of that discussion is reserved for chapters six and seven.

### **Cahokia's Physical and Cultural Background**

The Cahokia Mounds site in Collinsville, Illinois has fascinated both the public and scholars for generations. Located in the American Bottom near present day St. Louis, it is the largest earthen mound complex in North America. It contains over 120 individual mounds of various types (Fowler 1977, 1991, 1996), and could support much larger populations than were previously thought possible for sites north of Mexico. The range in population is estimated to be between 10,000-40,000 occupants at its peak, with 12,000-

20,000 being a reasonable estimate. To put this into perspective, the second largest Mississippian site is Moundville, which had a population of approximately 3,000 individuals; Cahokia is at least four times larger. These population figures are based on the arable landscape for maize agriculture, the number of potential residences, and the presence of large feasting remnants, ceramic seriation, and the number of burials excavated from various mounds within the Cahokia district (Pauketat 2004; Steponaitis 1998:26-43). As a cultural site, Cahokia's importance extends into the present period, and it is continually used for solstice/equinox observations, as well as a historic and cultural experience venue. I imagine that the Cahokia site had a similar ebb and flow to its population, during its height as a ceremonial center and trade hub, as it does currently. The archaeology supports views of population immigration into Cahokia from distant regions, as well as its composition as a multi-ethnic city.

Cahokia is nestled in a low drainage area, and is part of the Mississippi River meander belt system (Grimley et al. 2007; Schroeder 2000). It is located near Horseshoe Lake, an oxbow lake created by a cutoff meander of the Mississippi (Horseshoe Lake is to the northwest of Cahokia), and the site is additionally bordered by Cahokia Creek on the northern side of Monk's Mound. Throughout the history of use at Cahokia, the soils have been continually flooded and the low drainage rates would cause wet soil conditions. It is a marshy, floodplain area, which is likely significant not only for its use by the Mississippian population as an agricultural area, but also likely factored significantly into the choice of site placement for mythically significant reasons as well. Later recordings of widespread myths include imagery of wet human and underworld realms, which the built Cahokian landscape may embody (Brady and Ashmore 1999;

Fowler et al. 1999). The positioning of Cahokia in a marshy floodplain area would relate strongly to the descriptions of the wet earth world (Fowler et al. 1999:185).

Cahokia is located in the rich floodplain soils that were necessary for Mississippian agriculture. As a site for habitation, Cahokians dealt with the marshy soils and associated pests—frequently in the form of hordes of large, nipping bugs. They also produced some of the most influential artifacts (i.e., the falcon warrior dancers and ceramic and stoneware statuary) of the Mississippian period that were distributed to or inherited by populations living as far north as Wisconsin, the Caddo region of the Trans-Mississippi South, and the northwestern parts of Florida and Georgia. These items were copied and kept as heirlooms before they were interred in the many resting places throughout the Southeast (Payne 2010). The Mississippi River meander belt changes in the Cahokia region support a long history of marshy conditions in this location that extends beyond the occupations in this discussion. The marshy habitation site not only encouraged the growth of maize and a plethora of insects, it also encouraged many bird species and other wildlife to habitat at this location.

The discovery of these mounds and other mound sites throughout much of the Southeast and Midwest baffled early colonists and explorers who could not image that the indigenous populations whom they encountered could have constructed these often enormous features on the landscape. The “Myth of the Moundbuilders,” wrongfully credited other populations (pretty much any other population) for the construction of the earthen mounds in North America. This myth developed under racist sentiments has long since been contested and discredited by many (Downer 1997:27-28; Thomas 1894). It is now accepted that Native Americans north of Mexico did indeed modify their landscapes,

partly by constructing earthworks.

Cahokia and its mounds represent an extraordinary cultural feat. Positioning of the Cahokia site in this vast floodplain allowed agricultural pursuits to flourish. For instance, when maize was introduced as a staple crop, people living in the American Bottom were able to easily adopt this crop. In fact, maize has long been used by archaeologists as one of the cultural markers of Mississippian culture, as its abundance permitted some people to participate in non-subsistence based crafts that were included in vast trade networks; these include marine shell workings, hide tanning, and perhaps produced other non-durable crafts that did not survive to the present (Kehoe 2010; Trubitt 2003b). Furthermore, the surplus of maize allowed those with large amounts of time and labor to design, construct, and maintain the earthen mounds at this site.

Cultural occupation of Cahokia can be traced back into the Woodland period, with the population numbers at the site exploding, or as Timothy Pauketat describes, undergoing a sort of cultural “big bang” during the Mississippian Lohmann and Stirling phases. Archaeological reconstructions of Cahokia support the idea that the population at this site grew very rapidly beginning around AD 1050. This date further marked transitions in the iconographic styles represented, as well as changes in other artifact styles. The Cahokian sphere of cultural interaction and influence (including religious and political ideologies) extended beyond the American Bottom and Lower Mississippian regions to populations as far southeast as Florida, and deep into the northern plains in Wisconsin. Stylistic iconography continued to influence populations during later centuries as evidenced by the presence of Classic and Late Braden Style artifacts that were transported prior to AD 1400 to the southwest in Spiro, Oklahoma (Brown 1981,

2005; Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2000, 2010; Sabo 2010; Sharp et. al. 2010), and were additionally found at the Etowah site in Georgia (King and Corsci 2010), in Tennessee (King and Corsci 2010), and at various locations in northwestern Florida (Payne 2010).

Archaeological evidence demonstrates that the Cahokia site was occupied prior to AD 800 by Woodland populations, and was continually used by different indigenous populations—although later the usage of this site was by smaller population groups—until approximately AD 1700. The Mississippian peak at Cahokia had occurred during the Lohmann-Moorehead phases around AD 1000-1250 (Fowler 1977; Fowler et al. 1999) and the site was nearly entirely abandoned by its Mississippian inhabitants by the end of the Sand Prairie phase at approximately AD 1350- 1400 (Milner 1991:30; Young and Fowler 2000:310). When the region was later explored by European monks and colonists, they found that this land had not only been significantly modified by people, but they also encountered an Oneota population living at Cahokia. Research demonstrates that this subsequent population of Cahokians was both culturally and biologically distinct from its earlier inhabitants. The later population encountered at Cahokia was culturally Oneota, who entered the region from the north (Dye 2009). The Oneota entered in the American Bottom around AD 1300 (Dye 2009) and remained at the region throughout the early European contact period. Throughout the use of Cahokia, the landscape was modified and developed with mounded, and built non-mounded plaza and living places. This began early in the use of the site, and continued up into the Oneota phases. The communities living at Cahokia developed larger networks with nearby sites, including the East St. Louis Quarry site, and the St. Louis Mound City (Milner 1998; Pauketat 1998). The largest mounds at each of these locations were visible to each other on the ancient

landscape.

Archaeological evidence supports the idea that several communities were present at Cahokia (Alt 2006; Emerson and Hargrave 2000), and there were apparent social distinctions in rank, power, and position which demonstrate that the populations were organized into social and political factions. Why vastly different populations were drawn into the Cahokia remains a mystery, but recent research points to the far distances that some individuals traveled in order to be part of the Cahokian phenomenon (Alt 2006; Emerson and Hargrave 2000).

Julie Zimmermann Holt (2009) recently summarized debates on the socio-political status and rank of Cahokia, and explored its power and influence over its hinterlands. I will not fully recapitulate this debate here, beyond stating that Holt (2009) provides a elegant argument for Cahokia as being better understood by Geertz's theater state model as opposed to the social models of progression based on concepts of cultural evolution and political authority developed by Elman Service (1962). Debates on whether Cahokia is best described as a state, chiefdom or simply a "middle-range society," and additionally as hierarchical versus heterarchically arranged have long been addressed at great length in the literature, and continues to encourage thoughtful debate. These discussions continue to arise because the data from Cahokia does not fit easily into evolutionary models of socio-political complexity (Milner 1991:30; Pauketat 2007). The decision for me to exclude in-depth accounts of the details of this important debate was not a lightly made decision, but its inclusion seemed to further complicate this project more than it beneficially described Cahokia's setting. Suffice it to say, there is no doubt that Cahokia was extraordinary and its influence was far-reaching during the

Mississippian period. What emerges from this line of research is a dynamic image of an internally ranked population with a demonstratively wide-reach across the Eastern Woodlands. However, these models fall short when assessing the economic and political decision-making roles of Cahokia over the region (Milner 1991:31), and perhaps these relationships should not be assumed unilaterally in interpretations of differential mortuary contexts.

Pertinent to this project and still unresolved in the literature, is just who or what some of the elaborate burials uncovered by archaeologists represent. Can we are to interpret these behaviors as distinctive from socio-economic and even political figurehead models of representation? Furthermore, there needs to be a more careful approach to the archaeological questions that try to directly approach issues of representation, as these are too frequently interpreted as mirrored reflections of status in life (Binford 1971; Goldstein 1980, 1981; Saxe 1970; Pearson 1993; Sullivan and Mainfort 2010). Even with great steps away from earlier mortuary theories, there still remains a heavy reliance on interpretations of burials through an economic lens. These economic models are not simply about wealth, but are also include of other hierarchically arranged interpretations, including those that resemble class-based status models that may artificially impose socio-economic categories that were not present or are otherwise malapropos in their application to the populations being studied. Given the heterogeneous population known at Mound 72, these models fall short in their explanatory power.

Moreover, the economic mortuary and social rank models tend to reduce visible distinctions in mortuary practices between sites (Sullivan and Mainfort 2010:7). Therefore, in this project I am refocusing away from these economic interpretations, and



instead I am using the Cahokia Mound 72 mortuary context to test applications of modern definitions of violence to this ancient context. If applying the modern definitions is not a successful venture then this will point to some of the discrepancies in classification terms, or would suggest the need to redirect research to topics exploring the emergence of these actions on the modern scene. However, if the modern classifications work then this would demonstrate that some violent behaviors often thought of as modern phenomena have a longer existence in the human experience.

### **Mortuary Setting at Cahokia**

Although there are other cemeteries and mounds at Cahokia which were used throughout the history of the site, none have captivated the imagination of scholars more than that excavated in Mound 72 under the direction of Melvin Fowler during the 1967-1971 summer field sessions. This small mound has yielded the remains of many individuals who were differentially buried throughout the mound, and appear arranged with an overall structure that is suggestive of mythic motifs. Another excavated mortuary context from Cahokia is the burials from Powell Mound (Mound 86). Prior to its destruction, Powell Mound was the second largest mound at Cahokia—the salvage archaeological excavations in 1931 under the direction of Thorne Deuel removed the mound to make room for more arable farmlands (Ahler and DePuydt 1987). Of interest, two large burial pits were discovered during the salvage project on Powell Mound. The first burial pit was destroyed before it could be examined by the archaeologists, because of the machinery used to dismantle the



large mound. However, the second pit yielded evidence of a planned set of litter burials. These burials also included artifacts that resembled two of the burial features from Mound 72: Feature 229 upper, as these individuals had been interred on neatly arranged cedar sticks that were covered in bark; and Feature 101 where two individuals were interred with an intentionally placed shell blanket or mat between them (Ahler and DePuydt 1987:4; Rose et al. 1999). Also included with these burials were shell necklaces and copper covered cedar ornaments.

Additional similarities emerged in the overall constructive process between these mounds that were built in stages and were clearly used over longer periods of time. These similarities are particularly evident when comparing Lynne Goldstein's (2000) description of the construction of Mound 72 to Steven Ahler and Peter DePuydt's (1987:7-8) description of stages of Mound 86. These mounds were often simultaneously constructed and used at the Cahokia site, and exhibit shared structural components that are embedded with meaning(s). These meanings likely included a performance in ritual re-enactment of the tribal creation earth-diver myth (Hall 1997:17-23), and were performed by the creators of these mound groups. By enacting these earth-diver myths the Cahokians (and earlier Hopewell populations) were recreating their social worlds and placing themselves in central positions. By using the landscape and the deceased, Cahokians controlled or at least mediated the relationship between the living and dead, the human earth and the spirit underworld. These connections give those in power the authority and leadership to sway and influence where individuals go in life and death (Lankford 2007b).

Patterns in the mortuary program at Mound 72 have been previously examined (Brown 1971, 1981, 1997, 2005; Byers 2006; Kehoe 2007; Milner 1984, 1991, 1996;

Pauketat 2004; Pauketat and Emerson 1997; Rose 1999), but these interpretations are reliant on the idea that these burials can and should be centered on questions of elite versus non-elite burials, and that these burials directly represent the socio-economic, socio-political and religious status relationships and positions held in life (Binford 1971; Saxe 1970). This focus is not shocking nor even slightly surprising since the most elaborate known Mississippian burials were found in this mound; the elaborate shell-bird burials that date to the Fairmount phase (900-1050 AD). This extraordinary burial group contained a platform of over 20,000 shell beads arranged as a bird between two individuals (Brown 2003, 2005; Rose 1999; Young and Fowler 2000:137-138). However, if these burials are based on performances of mythic themes (Lankford 2007a) then status and rank relationships may not be the representative goal in tableau performance of these burials. This point reemerges throughout the discussions in the next few chapters, and is central to rethinking mortuary interpretations.

A key element of this study is the inclusion of the smaller groups of individuals who tend to be glossed over in many interpretations. These include the charnel house group, the paired burials, individual burials, and both the individual and grouped bundles. When we begin to divide some of these burial types we see a blend of individualizing and collective burial representations, which further supports theories that do not interpret these as a homogeneous group of dedications. Furthermore, the point in including these variations in burials is that they are too often glossed over, and forgotten in interpretations. I don't believe that these are superfluous and should not be treated as such.

Furthermore, and as a reminder of their limited inclusion here, since I have

devoted chapter six to the concept of captivity at Cahokia much of the discussion of the killed female individuals from the mass-graves excavated from Mound 72 are reserved for that chapter. In this chapter, the focus is predominately on the charnel house and associate pile burials, secondary bundle burials, the retainer burials, and the non-killed pit burials. What becomes increasingly evident are the distinctions in each of these burial groups that require analyses that do not homogenize these burials into a monolithic group of shared status.

### **Mound 72 Burials**

When Melvin Fowler decided to excavated the oddly shaped Mound 72, he was searching for a marker post. He postulated that Cahokia was a planned and structured city aligned with solar patterns with Monks Mound as the central structure at the site. Fowler additionally suggested that the southern portion of the mound group would likely contain a marker post for the site. He was successful, but found more than he expected. Several additional large posts were discovered (Fowler et al. 1999:35), indicating that this was the location of a woodhenge structure similar to the one located west of Monk's Mound (Wittry 1969). This woodhenge likely helped mark solar patterns—including those that were used to plan the site—and encouraged participation in seasonal events at Cahokia. This is supported by evidence of large scale feasting at Cahokia, which drew in people from, surrounding communities (Pauketat et al. 2002). The woodhenge solar observation structure predates all interments and mound features within Mound 72, and supports ideas that Mound 72 was purposefully located, although precisely what this location represents is still unknown.

### *Non-killed Pit Burials*

Although the majority of individual interred in pit-burials in Mound 72 were killed, the people buried in Features 210, 229 upper died of natural causes. These groups were neatly arranged, and were not restricted to the same age-sex and foreigner status as the killed female groups. Features 210 and 229 upper demonstrate several characteristics that were shared between burials that were included in this category of non-killed pit burial. For instance, these individuals were not mutilated or otherwise modified postmortem. Also, these burials were carefully and evenly spaced as they were interred, and the individuals were shrouded and potentially stored in the charnel house for a period prior to burial. The relatively high level of articulation of these burials indicates that the shrouding and binding to the litters helped keep the bodies in place for later burial. This could indicate that these individuals do not merit postmortem modification, or that they were simply in an early phase of processing when the charnel house was emptied.

Cedar poles were discovered in Feature 229 upper, but not in Feature 210. Although there were no cedar poles found in the excavation of Feature 210, the neat and even spacing of these individuals may indicate that the poles from these litters had deteriorated in the past. This would link these litter burials to the symbolism of those contained in Powell Mound (Mound 86) and to the later Caddoan burials at the Great Mortuary at Spiro (Brown 1971, 2010). At this time the meaning or purpose of the cedar poles is unknown beyond their use as potentially marking hierarchical status relationships. Alternatively or in addition to status interpretations, this could point to a relationship with the time of death of the individuals and the occupancy status in the charnel house. The length of time from death to burial may influence the use of litters to

prevent the decaying flesh to release bones at inopportune times. In other words, the litter could demonstrate a waiting period from some burials (Byers 2006). The symbolism of the Mound 72 woodhedge indicates that the timing of the burial was highly significant at this specific mound. Perhaps the litter burials were individuals who died closer to the culturally prescribed burial period (Kay and Sabo 2006).

### *Killed Pit Burials*

Due to the focus on captivity, status, and violence at the end of this chapter, as well as in the subsequent chapters, I will only briefly mention the killed pit burials here. These include the four female pits that are frequently described as sacrificial victims, and the individuals in Feature 229 lower who contrast with the individuals interred above them. As later discussed, there is little reason to assume that if individuals were sacrificially killed for political and/or religious purposes that there were no secular ties as well. These are not mutually exclusive behaviors, which is evidenced in the selective choices that Cahokians made to include specific populations in these lethal rituals.

There are several features that contrast with the late phase, non-killed pit burials. Some of these contrasting features predate Features 229 and 210. The earlier killed pit burials are primarily composed of young women, buried in four separate pits with 19-53 individuals per pit. The three female graves that surround the dismantled charnel house are arranged in a more congruous pattern than the later mass grave of 53 females (Feature 105). This may indicate that there was a shift in the symbolism and motivations for including the later group, perhaps that these females were taken from a different population. In other words, that the final group of killed females were from a group that

the Cahokians saw as a homogeneous population that was analogous to the symbolism surrounding the earlier three groups.



Figure 5.2 Killed captives from Feature 229 Lower. Burial numbers 220, 216, 231, 215 and 218 are visible. Image taken by Jerome Rose. Modified by author. Used with permission by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

The mixed insider male/female group contained in Feature 229 lower is distinctive from the female killed pit burials in several regards. First, this group may represent a group of elders who were killed. This is indicated in part by the high level of dental attrition that is not only explained by a dietary distinction, but relates to an older age group (Cohen 1974). Second, the increased visibility of the death of the individuals in Feature 229 lower is striking (Figures 5.2, 5.3). This is discussed in more depth later in



this chapter. It is clear that the Feature 229 lower burial group was not selected for execution for identical reasons to the earlier female killed pit burials. Now the age and sex ranges were widened to include much older individuals, and males.

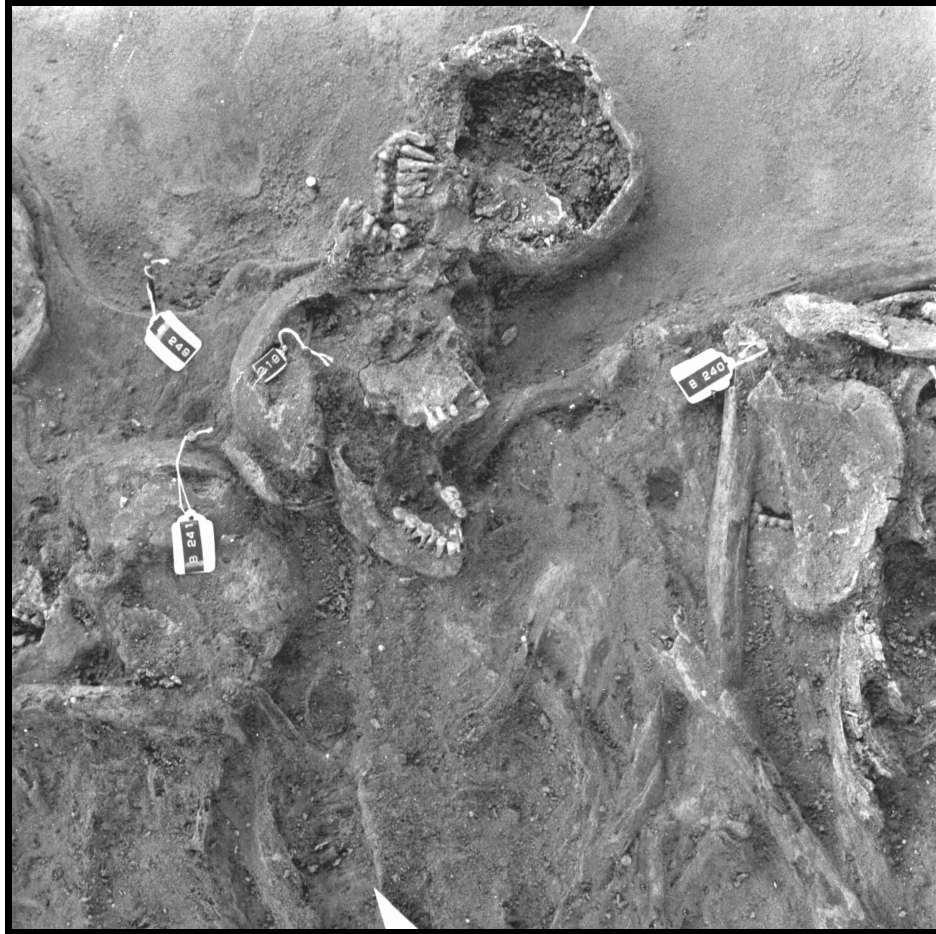


Figure 5.3 Captives from Feature 229 Lower. Burials 240, 241, 243, 249, and 219 are visible. Image taken by Jerome Rose. Modified by author. Used with permission by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

### *The Shell-Bird and Retainer Burials*

For many years the shell-bird burial group has been discussed with a strong focus on the individual laying on the top portion of the shell platform. This burial has been interpreted as the remains of a paramount chief, or as a primary shaman figurehead. These theories were supported by ethnographic and historical evidence from a separate

population from the southeast, the Natchez (Swanton 1911, 1946), as well as through potentially less intentional connections formed by using the images sketched by Theodore de Bry based on the descriptions by Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues (Milanich 2005). Given the complexity of both the Natchez socio-political structure and the archaeological reconstructions that demonstrated time and again that Cahokia was something extraordinary—even surprisingly so, given encounters with later cultures that had abandoned Cahokia and its social complexities—it is no surprise that analogies to the complex and hierarchically arranged system of Natchez Suns had been and continues to be supported. Here a “Great Sun,” who can be interpreted as a paramount/regional leader, indirectly controlled a large region by maintaining other, lesser Suns in hinterland sites.

The shell-bird burials were surrounded by eleven other individuals who were likely killed at the time the shell-bird burials were interred. Four of these individuals were likely retainers (Rose 1999) and are directly associated with the shell-bird burials. The position of these four individuals is that they surround the dual shell-bird individuals; notably, burial number 12 who was positioned on the eastern side of the shell bird burials and was killed at the burial location. All eleven of these burials appear in contrast with many of the burials within the mound that contain multiple individuals; although clearly associated with each other and with the shell-bird burials, these four individuals are individually interred and do not share grave space. The clear differentiation between these individuals and other mass burials in Mound 72 support interpretations of them holding a separate position/role in the mound group. Placement close to the shell-bird burials is suggestive of their relationships with the shell-bird individuals, although these relationships are by no means clearly articulated. Part of the reasoning behind calling

these individuals retainers, is because these were linked to burial practices known from the hierarchical Natchez and other southeastern populations' burial practices that included the burial of attendants/retainers with significant individuals.

The remaining seven who are also likely retainers, are located approximately four meters to the southwest and are directly associated with a large cache of artifacts. This cache includes chunkee stones, mica sheets, and two large bundles of arrows. The inclusion of these specific artifacts is interesting, and has guided scholarship in directions that include careful research of the oral accounts of nearby populations during the European Contact Period. What made these accounts exceptionally relevant were the references to the culture-hero Red-Horn, as well as a variety of widespread twin accounts. The significance of this symbolism will be explained shortly.

The seemingly unique nature of the shell-bird burial and the obvious amount of time and energy dedicated to its construction (Brown 1981, 1997; Tainter 1975, 1978) demonstrates that these individuals carried a special rank within the society. It is not clear what position(s) these individuals held in society, such as chiefs or shamans; however, they were not merely part of the elite-ranked members of society, but as suggested by James Brown (2003) may be representative of something entirely different from a paramount status position such as a re-enactment of Chunkee players or a culture-hero (Hall 1997, 2000). Significantly, these interpretations challenge rigid portrayals of Cahokia's socio-political and religious structures, and are much more flexible in terms of representation. This is not to say that Cahokia was without an internal hierarchical structure, just that this structure may not be easily interpreted through the material culture interred with burials (i.e., grave goods).

What are lacking are discussions of the various other graves that are included in this mound and specifically theories about what these differences represent. These burials are highly varied in their arrangement and are more than likely representative of different social values and beliefs that are ultimately connected, as evidenced by their inclusion within a single final mound. The eight mass graves in Mound 72 include: a group of individuals associated with the charnel house, four female graves, a grave with four men (decapitated and with their hands removed), and a mixed grave where individuals appear to be thrown in without being carefully arranged (Pauketat 2004; Rose 1999). There are at least two additional mass graves contained in Mound 72 that have not been excavated (Pauketat 2009 personal communication, Rose 2007 personal communication).

#### *Charnel House Burials*

The burials associated with the charnel house structure in Mound 72 have been tangentially included in interpretations of this mortuary context. Included in the charnel house group are the pile burials as well as the extended burials in the northwest portion of the mound. Not only are these burials associated with the charnel house, they were also interred with exotic grave goods, and were surrounded by three pit burials of captive females. These females were killed and interred within the mound, with previous interpretations linking them to the shell-bird burials (Brown 1997; Milner 1984:479; Rose 1999). Spatially speaking, these female pit burials are related to the symbolism evoked in the charnel house group rather than to the shell-bird burials, for which they have been described as killed for or in honor of by various scholars (Fowler et al. 1999; Pauketat 2004; Rose 1999). These pit-burials surround much of the ground to the east,

south and southwest of the dismantled structure, and do not represent the primary burial focus for the charnel house group.

Though the connections between the charnel house groups and the surrounding female pits are somewhat unclear, they were all included under a shared submound. The female mass graves were interred in different levels of the mound, and were probably episodic in their occurrence. Feature 205 may have been the first of these burial pits, and this was later followed by the addition of Features 214, 237, and even later by Feature 105 (Rose 1999). However, as Pauketat (2004:87-95; 2005) points out, there are overall continuities in their burial arrangements that demonstrate that these were intended to resemble if not replicate a predefined pattern. For example, the dual layering of the females interred in the two largest graves shows continuous knowledge and mortuary ritual coherence on the part of the participants who performed the mortuary rituals. This indicates that there were patterns that the individuals were aware of and followed despite potential temporal divisions. In other words, there is a clear level of cultural coherence in the practice of these burials. The female burial pits were likely included within the Mound 72 context when the charnel house structure was emptied and dismantled. These are located to the south and to the eastern side of the dismantled structure. These patterns may relate to the overall symbolism of this publicly visible burial mound, and should continue to be researched further.

The primary charnel house group is a composite of several pile burials and includes several extended individuals (Rose 1999:65-66). The organized remains of the six pile groups (Burials: 121, 122, 161, 162, 163, and 164) were sorted by bone type supporting the idea that the building structure present in the northwestern side of Mound

72 was indeed a charnel house used in the processing of the remains of some of the deceased. The individuals included in these pile burials had a large age range from 15 to over 35 years of age, but were not sexable (Rose 1999:66).

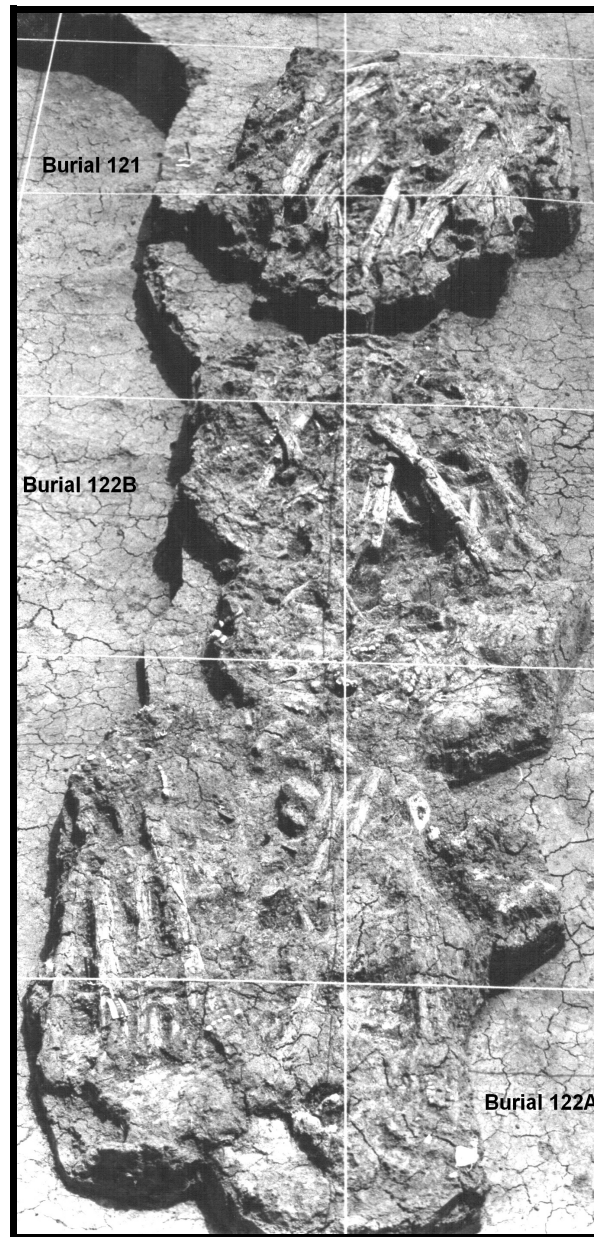


Figure 5.4 Pile burials 121, 122A, and 122B from Feature 219 in the northwest area of Mound 72. Image taken by Jerome Rose. Modified by author. Used with permission by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

The high level of sorted disarticulation bundles indicate that these bodies were

defleshed prior to burial, and were organized based on bone type. Martin Byers (2006) links the processing of remains at Cahokia to the mortuary processing of the Natchez. Byers (2006) theorizes that following death those who were being processed would undergo several stages (culturally specific) and could include several interments in the final pile. These rituals could also include the movement of the remains between several sites in a region. Although it is not known if some burials were removed from this charnel location and moved to other locations, what is evident is that this charnel house was emptied and some of the processed remains were interred in Mound 72 (Rose 1999). The dismantling of the charnel house involved the cleaning of the ground before the burials were placed. Some of the aforementioned pile burials were kept in the direct vicinity of the charnel house while the others that were potentially removed are not able to be reconstructed.

The practice of lengthy bodily processing of the dead that was evident in some of mound constructions at Cahokia extends back into Woodland times (Dancey 2005:118-120). In both the Mississippian and Woodland traditions, the bones were sorted and interred in various piles throughout mounds. This pile burial type was also excavated from the Wilson Mound (Alt and Pauketat 2007). What this demonstrates is that the Mound 72 burial forms are not unique when viewed separately, but can still be considered a unique arrangement when they are considered together.

The last group of interments to discuss as associated with this charnel house group is four extended burials. Burials 117, 118 and Burials 119, 120 were buried in two paired groups (Rose 1999:65). Burials 117 and 118 both had been adorned with shell-bead choker style necklaces. These were a female-male pair, who was intentionally interred

together (Figure 5.5). The male, Burial 118 was buried in a prone position with one hand near his neck (Brown 1966:5; Rose 1999:66).



Figure 5.5 Burials 119 and 120 from the charnel house feature. Image taken by Jerome Rose. Modified by author. Used with permission by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Burial 119 was another extended male associated with the Feature 219 charnel house, and he too was buried in the prone position with his fingers located beneath his cervical vertebrae. As Rose (1999:66) notes, this burial position has been identified in other contexts, but its meaning is not fully known. Potentially this could be a victim of choking or strangulation, but other than the positioning of the body there is no further support of this idea. The male-female duality and positioning is interesting, as these paired individuals embody the same structuring principles.



### *Secondary Bundle Burials*

Two categories of bundle burials were included into this mortuary context. The first is described as disarticulated bundles. This group includes the pile burials (Burials: 121, 122, 161, 162, 163, and 164) that were associated with the charnel house structure, and are described above. The second bundle type is the partially-articulated form. Here the remains were not entirely free from flesh/ligaments and remained partially articulated throughout the burial process. The burials are related to the charnel house, but were interred throughout the mound.

### **Defining the Differentially Killed**

The mass female and mixed-sex burials that were incorporated into this mound have been repeatedly interpreted as burials directly associated with the shell-bird burials. These interpretations are focused on how these killed and communally buried individuals factor into the status of other burials in Mound 72. Interestingly, these mass burial pits were not buried directly alongside of the shell-bird burials, and some were interred earlier, such as the Sub2 mound burials, while others like Features 229, 201, 105, and 106 were interred much later (Alt and Pauketat 2007; Goldstein 2000; Rose 1999). Additionally, not all the killed individuals shared equivalent positions in society, as is discussed at great length in chapters six and seven.

When all of the burials in Mound 72 are considered together it represents a unique grouping in the Mississippian world. Interestingly, when broken down to discrete categories based on form, these burials appear similar to burials known from the larger region, including other sites like Spiro. James Brown (2010) recently compared the

Mound 72 Sub-mound features with the structure of the Great Mortuary at Spiro. The population at Spiro had already been known from Brown's previous publications to have used litters in some of their burials that were reminiscent of those from the late phase Feature 229 upper (Brown 1981, 2010). Brown's more recent comparison demonstrated continuity in the constructive use of mound space from the earlier Mound 72 phases, as the populations at each site reconstructed an enactment of their culturally-specific understanding of the world (Bailey 1995; Brown 2010:38; Fowler et al. 1999). In other words, the burial types themselves are not what makes Mound 72 unique, it is their arrangement together and incorporation into the Cahokian site arrangement that makes them stand out from other archaeological sites.

This mound has several burial modes present, and the most relevant to this project is Feature 229 Lower, where 39 individuals were found in a mass grave without much arrangement (Rose 1999) and very clear evidence of physical violence. These individuals are different from the majority of the burials contained in this mound, and may represent individuals who were victims of social violence, such as “genocidal” warfare (Blick 1988; Freeman 1995; Katz 1995). The individuals here experienced very violent deaths compared to the rest of the mass graves, and this separates them from the other killed individuals in this mortuary context. Some of the Feature 229 lower individuals were not even completely dead as they were covered with soils and the individuals buried on litters above. In addition, the lack of careful arrangement and their face-down interment do not conform to the pattern of the other burials. These characteristics are different from the other mass graves in the mound that fall under the category of “ritually sacrificed” individuals. Furthermore, the evidence does not fit in a model of prestige-gaining, as this

group was not afforded the same burial treatment of the other individuals interred in mass graves. Overall, many accounts of the Mound 72 burials include some recognition of how vastly different this feature is within the context, yet none have really explored what it represents and why this feature was included in Mound 72.

Human sacrifice has been viewed as a way to display elite status based on the overall displays of power and prestige over other individuals in Cahokia's sphere of influence (Porubcan 2000). Other interpretations suggest this practice as a mechanism for lower-status individuals to increase the status and prestige of their lineages, especially if these sacrifices were voluntary as claimed in the chronicler accounts of some of the Natchez sacrifices (Gibson 1974; Lankford 1984; Swanton 1946). Both these concepts—the willingness of participants, and the increase in status/prestige—are difficult, if not impossible, to infer from the archaeological record at Cahokia. This is particularly true, if one takes Feature 229 lower into account, where an argument for increased status even for the living kin (Pearson 1993) is unlikely. These individuals were not extensively tortured to demonstrate their bravery and resilience, nor were trophy body parts taken to gain social or symbolic control over the spirits of these killed individuals. Rather, this mixed male/female group appears to have been quickly killed and disposed of by the Cahokians. Oral accounts of ritual traditions, including the Skiri-Pawnee Morning Star sacrifice ritual, the green corn sacrifices (Hall 1997, 2000), and the ritual sacrifice of individuals following the deaths of the Suns by the Natchez (Swanton 1946) included sacrificial killings, including some that were apparently willingly performed. In these cases, the status of the surviving family members may have increased if the individuals bravely faced death. This is supported by some accounts of the killing of captives (Cole

2000; Demos 1994; Driver 1966).

Though the actual social positions and statuses of the killed females in Mound 72 from their natal communities are unknown, scholars researching Cahokia do not place these female captives into a category that portrays their treatment and imposed status as acts of denigration (Fowler et al. 1999, Pauketat 2009). In part, these interpretations recognize that in general, females at Mississippian sites were not frequently abused, and they are depicted prominently in iconography portraying females as important and well treated members of the society. However, it is a difficult assumption when extended to non-Cahokian females, particularly when it is taken into account that *these* females were purposefully killed *en masse* during the prime of their lives. Additionally, these theories frequently assume that these killed females were participants in sacrificial rites that may have garnered status for corporate lineages, but there is no direct evidence that demonstrates this connection. Lastly, if these females were captives sacrificed in a performance or as payment to deities, this does not remove the purposeful selection of out-group participants. Further, the religious or political nature of the killings does not reduce the secular and demographic consequences that would result from this behavior.

Before I proceed in presenting the evidence of female captivity at Cahokia, several important distinctions need to be addressed between captives killed in the often cited Natchez comparison to the examples above, as well as differences in these practices that occurred during later colonial periods. First, when captives are killed for a leader, as in the case of the Natchez, the sacrificed individuals were fellow members of the population, who were selected as retainers (frequently based on kinship lines) years in advance to the death of the leader. This prestige-gaining strategy therefore appears to be

available as an internal strategy for status. This is not pointed out to completely exclude any possible inclusions of outsiders, but only to note that as a prestige mechanism, the inclusion of non-Natchez may have been limited in occurrence to a nominal frequency.

Secondly, if the females killed at Cahokia were acquired from raids similar to those recorded during the early European colonial periods, the females could represent a range of status positions that are now unknowable. What stands out demographically is that these females were all of reproductive (or close to) in age. Additionally, they were moved from their communities to Cahokia for a short period of captivity prior to their intentional deaths, as discussed in chapter six. It is likely that these females, as well as the other killed individuals within this burial context represent several socially important phenomena that extend beyond sacrifices for mythic or worldly figures, but cross into the secular relationships that were negotiated between populations, in ways that were not always pleasant. To reiterate, these Cahokians were not selecting Cahokian females for inclusion into these killed female groups, leaving many questions unanswered. Could some of the killed individuals indicate attempted population eradication, or genocidal tendencies? How can other violent events in prehistory help us understand what occurred at Cahokia? In order to answer these questions, we need to identify and deconstruct similar events in modern contexts, in order to compare some of the pathological and demographic trends relating to different violent encounters, and the potential overlaps in these categories.

Further, if Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois (2004) are correct in thinking that acts of violence are part of a genocide continuum, we should be able to compare these events by isolating the differences between them. However, what I found

in completing this research was that the evidence of physical trauma overlaps significantly, and should not be used without supporting archaeological and, when possible, historic evidence. That is, events that included physically violent actions require careful bioarchaeological analysis that is focused on eliminating the examples from seemingly distinct categories of violence. This is no easy task, and in fact, what continuously emerged in this project was a shocking lack of unity among researchers in how analytic categories are used. This resulted in a severe reduction in the ability to compare the data in many cases that went beyond the anticipated theoretical considerations that were expected to emerge in the exploration of the longevity of these behaviors. These definitional difficulties were especially apparent when the behaviors crossed the interpretive lines constructed by the theorists, including the Mound 72 dataset that had such a large variety of killed and non-killed individuals included that could related to several distinct motivations, and with different goals in mind. Namely, the Mound 72 data were both ritualized and selective in the individuals included in these acts of violence.

### **Interpretations of Death and Burial in Mound 72**

The literature dealing with interpretations of social ranking within the population at Cahokia that were constructed based upon assumed status categories interpreted from mortuary context interests me greatly. For instance, the socio-economic rank systems at Cahokia are reliant on the interpretation of burial remains, particularly from the Mound 72 excavations. If we interpret these burial differences as representative of something other than relative socio-economic status, such as a mythic tableau, then a very different

scenario emerges. There are differences present in the burials, but interpretation of relative socio-economic status is not the only way to interpret these burial distinctions. While I have no intention of completely denouncing any socio-economic ranking at Cahokia based on reinterpretation of these burials, I propose that these alternate views open our interpretive lens to other explanations. Additionally, we need to continue to move beyond the interpretation of the killed individuals contained in Mound 72 as ritually sacrificed individuals or as a singular dedication to important members of the Cahokian society; rather, we need to refocus research onto the internal differentiation between these mass graves and link them to the larger Mississippian cosmology. For instance, the multiple reinterpretations of the shell-bird burials (Feature 101): as a shaman (Emerson 2003), a paramount chief, the culture-hero Red Horn (Hall 1997, 2000), and as a chunkee player involved in a mythic performance (Brown 2005), have encouraged more theoretical interest for the Cahokia site, and have demonstrated the overlap between religious and secular behaviors. Still problematic is that each of these interpretations view the majority of the burials as dedications to these figures and/or the mound construction. These interpretations mask the distinguishing characteristics between the burials, and tend to conflate the timing of what appears to be multiple events into one or two phases. In other words, these theories are ill-equipped to explain why certain features were important to include in this mound, such as the four headless-handless males, or dual-layered female graves, which in the former example is found in other sites within the cultural region (Hall 2000). This is where the some of the larger Mississippian beliefs and constructions of the cosmos should prove enlightening.

It is overly simplistic to explain the Mound 72 burials as solely, or even

predominately, ritualistic (Steadman 2008). There are large variations among each burial group. Further, there is little reason to argue that warfare activities are not ritualized, or that they are ritualized to a lesser extent, as this is simply incorrect. Warfare activities are highly ritualized, although they may not be enacted for religious motivations, ideology can often play a role. Steadman seems to be marking a distinction between warfare activities that are focused on gaining access to lands, or other important resources such as food, water, or timber as opposed to socio-political differences, or differences in religious beliefs. It is likely that the females, who were brought in for ritualized killing, were captured from a warfare raid, as the practice of capturing females from vanquished communities is documented rather extensively into the European Colonial Period (Cole 2000; Demos 1994; Driver 1966). In some of these cases, a village was raided while the majority of males were out hunting, or otherwise called away, leaving the village vulnerable. The women would then be captured by the raiders and brought to their new location. Here the details of treatments ranged greatly based on the motivation for the capture, the cultural beliefs of the captors, as well as the demeanor of the individuals (often these were primarily but not exclusively female) who were obtained (Cole 2000).

In dealing with the lower portion of Feature 229, the evidence displays strong differences between this feature and some of the other burial groups included within the mound. For example, within Feature 229 lower, three individuals were decapitated, two had stone points (arrowheads) embedded in the thoracic vertebrae region of their bodies. Also, the majority of these individuals were buried face-down, which is thought of as a sign of disrespect or sometimes it is conceptualized as a way to prevent the spirit of the deceased from moving into an afterlife. Overall, the manner of death and appearance of a



quickly enacted killing ritual appears different from other features from the mound (Rose 1999) that may have taken longer periods of time to prepare as demonstrated by the presence of a charnel house. Those included in Feature 229 lower were killed on the edge of the previously dug pit, and fell into their shared grave as they died. Some were still alive in the pits, as others were killed and joined them.

Interestingly, the evidence associated with mode of death are the same conditions included in discussions of evidence of warfare at the Orendorf site (Steadman 2008), and therefore allow these individuals to be included in a category other than ritual sacrifice. Possibilities include individuals who died in warfare, interpersonal conflict, or possibly as evidence of eradicating a portion of the population who were resistant to dominant ideologies—or were otherwise identified as different from others living at or nearby Cahokia—or who were attempting to gain kin honor by participating in these rituals. Timothy Pauketat is correct in questioning just how archaeologists could demonstrate if a group was practicing resistance to domination (Pauketat 1997, 2004:108), the fact remains that these individuals were killed long after the first set of burials: including those of possible retainers, or actors for the mythic tableau, and should be at least separated out for analysis. Perhaps resistance is not able to be reconstructed, but the concept of positionality should continue to be questioned and theorized. Additionally complicating interpretations is that these individuals (in Feature 220 lower), although brutally killed and with several decapitations, were not being used as social or political trophies, at least not in prolonged displays. This is evidenced by the three decapitated crania that were immediately tossed into pit, after they had been presumably removed accidentally by the force exerted to kill these individuals with a large, blunt mace. None

of these crania were taken as trophies or displayed on the site. Any theories that view these killed individuals as symbolically and actually inducing fear into factions or the Cahokian population at large, need to account for the brevity of this event in regards to body disposal. Even though these killings were publicly performed in an open space, the remnants of it were rapidly made hidden, as the bodies were quickly covered by soils.

Genetic similarities are demonstrated in dentition (Cohen 1974; Rose 1999) that relate the individuals in Feature 229 lower to other individuals buried in the mound. Interestingly, the individuals killed and interred in Feature 229 lower were related to the burials above them in Feature 229 upper. However, these individuals, although biologically related, were distinctive in burial and in life. The significantly higher level of dental attrition (wear resultant from age and behavioral/dietary conditions) allows us to recognize these individuals as separate from both the imported killed females and others who lived at Cahokia. This group of killed individuals was significantly older than the other captive females included in this mortuary context, and may have had differences in their diet (Ambrose et al. 2003; Yerkes 2005), but the sample size for the primary dietary analysis was extremely limited. In any case, their visually violent deaths and rather unorganized, haphazard arrangement separate these killed individuals from the other presumably killed individuals within the mound (Features: 105, 106, 205, 214, and 237). This is especially evident when contrasted with the overlying part of Feature 229, where the upper portion was orderly, and contained shrouded individuals with cedar litters—interpreted by James Brown (1971) at Spiro to denote higher status individuals. Another important contrast to point out is that although the individuals were killed on site and immediately thrown into the pit, some of the individuals in the upper portion had been

dead for an extended period of time prior to burial as noted by their apparent level of disarticulation due to decomposition when placed into Mound 72, as well as what appears to be a few interred with a different head-foot orientation—probably unintentionally based on the arrangement of head alignments within each of these features. The practice of secondary burial of the individuals in the upper level of the feature again corresponds with the Spiro data.

### *Recontextualizing*

It is of utmost importance to continue to use a contextual approach for interpreting violent events if one hopes to go beyond simply describing burial ceremonies in broad terms, and instead is seeking to understand and reconstruct the circumstances and events that produced these phenomena. The burials of victims of violence by the perpetrators at some prehistoric Southeastern sites indicate that there were socially-accepted procedures for the perpetrators to dispose of some of their victims, which corresponds to chroniclers' descriptions of Natchez burials for victims, including those who accepted their roles as retainers (Swanton 1911, 1946). Since there is no historical documentation for events at Cahokia we need to be extremely careful in our reconstructions, even though some of these burial contexts include recognizable symbols that reflect ancient conceptions of the world. By using a contextual approach we can include questions of: Who were these individuals? Were they simply sacrificial victims—ritually killed? Or are there indications that some of them could have been part of interpersonal or larger social conflict? How do their burials compare to the burials of other individuals within the Mississippian society?

In the case of Mound 72, there are separate burial pits where their arrangement,

the individuals included, and how they were treated at death or burial are differentiated. This indicates that there were differences between the treatments of these groups; although all were included within the final capping and shaping of Mound 72, and more likely were not imbued with meanings now lost to time. However, interpretations of these burials should account for the variations that these burials display by not automatically lumping them into a homogeneous class nor even a undifferentiated status category. Additionally, it should also include a recognition that there is a union present between all of the Mound 72 burials as well. We can infer this connection between burials, as they were all interred within the larger capping of the mound. What does this connection represent in terms of the complex interplay between life and death, destruction and renewal, naturally and socially caused death, order and chaos, the mythic and the reality—all within the context of this one mound?

### **Early Mississippian Violence and Peacemaking in the American Bottom**

The early days of the Mississippian period at Cahokia included the creation of the grisly interments collectively and repeatedly buried in Mound 72. This early and short-lived period of social violence was followed by a period of relatively peaceful interactions during the continued expansion of ideas and power at Cahokia. Fascinatingly, the growth of Mississippian ideas and material culture, and specifically those that were produced or strongly influenced by the population at Cahokia appears, to have spread without widespread destruction of nearby villages. The diverse populations immigrating into Cahokia (Alt 2006; Emerson and Hargrave 2000) were not necessarily under any sort of physical threat of violence from other populations that would force them to seek

shelter/solitude in a large population center, and if they were pressured by the threat of violence, the direct evidence (Dye 2009:7) has yet to be uncovered. What was discovered was that the date of the East St. Louis palisade being burned corresponds directly to when the palisade at Cahokia was built; although this occurred later than the killed burials. To date, there is no evidence of retaliation from the population(s) from which these females were taken. This could indicate that they were taken from greatly distant locations, and therefore their people had no way to find them, or that they did not want to further provoke the Cahokians. There is no evidence that these killings were part of a vengeance cycle, and as captives the prestige models do not fit.

Even more interesting is that from the early days at Cahokia as a rising mound center, the inhabitants at Cahokia coerced others into participating in their cosmological views, and included their captives into lethal rituals. It is at this location that the public violence was enacted to solidify the political position of the Cahokians in the region (Emerson 1997, 2007; Emerson and Pauketat 2002; Pauketat and Emerson 1997; Porubcan 2000). These actions have mystified archaeologists, and offer points of contention that are not easily dismissed away. As mentioned in chapter four and earlier in this chapter, the variety of burial groups and treatments in Mound 72 demonstrate that those buried in this mound arrived at their resting places under substantially different circumstances, even among the groups who were killed. Moreover, both the killed and the non-killed interments were likely displayed in publicly performed rituals for vastly different evocative reasons that cannot be reduced to corporate prestige mechanisms nor as representative of inter-class or status-based dynamics.

Being a large and fortified population center, it is not surprising that evidence of

raids and other attacks directly on the Cahokia site have not been identified (Trubitt, personal communication 2008). The sheer number of individuals at the site would be enough to keep enemies and marauders away. However, if there were members of the Cahokian community living off-site at homesteads or in small villages/hamlets these would be more likely targets for attacks. This remains speculative, as the closest attack that is recognized near Cahokia was the burning of the East St. Louis palisade in AD 1150-1200 (Emerson and Pauketat 2010); the same period in which the palisade at Cahokia was built, and Mound 72 constructions included the burial of individuals in Features 210 and 229 (Goldstein 2000; Rose 1999). Perhaps the palisade at Cahokia was constructed to ward off those who burned the East St. Louis palisade and was successful in further deterring an attack on the site.

**--CHAPTER SIX--**  
**CAPTIVITY AT CAHOKIA**

Thinking about life in captivity can evoke images of long-term hardship and abuse. Images distributed by media venues of nameless victims cause viewers to think about the loss of individuality, resources, and a life once known—values of modernity that likely overlap with those assumed to have been held in the past. This is not at all a surprising conclusion given recent experiences of refugees, victims of war, and other subjugated people that continue to emerge in modern images covering magazines and newspapers. However, these recent events also point to the large differences in the treatment of captives, which should not be conflated to simply treatment of low-status or non-elite individuals who are members of the captor society. For instance, there are some cases in which captives may be allowed inclusion into society, while in others this can be denied to the point of physical removal or death of the captive. Captivity length ranged greatly in the historic period; some lasted only a few hours while others lasted the duration of the life of the captive (Cole 2000; Demos 1994; Driver 1966; Gallay 2002).

The captive experience is one filled with great variation based on the culture, gender, age and the interpersonal relationships sought by both captor and captive. This is clearly exemplified in two captive accounts from the Texas frontier. Rachel Plummer and her cousin Cynthia Ann Parker had drastically different experiences when taken as captives by Comanche in 1836. Their greatly differing experiences likely relate to their age differences when taken (Cole 2000:62-62, 104). Cynthia was eight years old when taken captive and assimilated so well into the Comanche community that she fought

against her ultimate removal and reintegration into the white world; whereas Rachel was older and pregnant when she and her son James were taken. After giving birth, Rachel's new born was killed by the Comanche, and she wrote about her abuse and desire to flee (Cole 2000:63; Plummer 1984:333-366). These distinctions in captive experience were also evident during the early periods of European interactions with various indigenous populations in North America. These differences in captive experience are interesting, as they could be influenced by age, sex, goal of the captivity, as well the individual's reaction to their captors (Cole 2000; Demos 1994; Driver 1966; Gallay 2002). Interestingly, variations in length of captivity and future interactions between the captors and captives also varied based on some of the same lines of delineation.

It is of importance to note early on in this chapter that captives often are not directly included as a simple political or economic tier system and should not be simply termed “low status,” which tends to refer to socio-economic and/or political status of in-group members of the population. The status of the captive is contingently negotiated based on their inclusion or exclusion from their captors’ society, even in the dramatically differential experiences of Rachel Plummer and Cynthia Ann Parker the differences in their experiences of inclusion/exclusion are obvious. Additionally, socio-economic and political status is most often interpreted from burial inclusions/treatments that are deemed reflections of status in life (Binford 1971; Goldstein 1980; Saxe 1970). What is important, and where my main contention in the use of the term “low status” for these victims is that elites and non-elites are members of a shared social group, while captives are often (but not always) from an outside population. Captives frequently are not treated in the same manner as other social non-elites. Instead, captives seem to maintain a special



status, and potentially will never gain access to an insider status, even those of the lowest status in-group members. By seeing “captive” as a unique and separate status from “low status,” we are able to better understand their positionality. Therefore, the focus in the status discussion in this chapter is on the idea of captivity as a status category, and how non-local captives complicate current interpretive models.

Mound 72 at Cahokia presents a case where captivity, warfare, selective killing, and performances of cosmological myths share a mortuary context. These categories overlap like sets in a Venn diagram, and are inseparable. Due to the complexity of the Mound 72 burials, questions involving the identification of the forms of violence remain tangled. Specifically, there are questions involving the type of events that occurred leading to the intentional deaths of at least 175 individuals; the location of natal communities of the female captives brought into Cahokia, and how all these interments potentially relate together in larger visions of cosmological and social significance—namely how they are sometimes making symbolic references to important myth cycles in a tableau performance constructed by the Cahokians.

There have been and continue to be promising bioarchaeological studies of the physical remains of these individuals that demonstrate differences in population, diet, and infectious lesion rates between individuals in Mound 72 (Ambrose et al. 2003; Hedman 2006; Milner 1991, 2007, Milner and Buikstra 2006; Powell 2000; Powell and Cook 2005; Rose 1999; Yerkes 2005). These are all interesting points, and provide much needed data used in understanding how different communities at Cahokia and outside of Cahokia interacted. It is clear that there were both biological (i.e., age and sex) and social differences (i.e. demonstrated by the many differential burial patterns) between the burial

groups contained within this mound that were recognizable to the population burying them, which is why they remained distinctive enough to encourage the continual research on the differential burials at this site.

In this chapter, I aim to further analyze the differential burials by focusing on the sometimes tangled relationships between those interred and the individuals burying them (Pearson 1993). Through mortuary performances Cahokians (re)created their social relationships (Noyes and Abrahams 1999; Piot 1999; Schieffelin 1985). It is assumed that captors imposed a captive identity onto those they dominated as they situated them into their own Cahokian-centered cosmological context. Thus, interpretations of these mortuary contexts should not be seen as “either/or” in their representations of social and cosmological factors, but that through the burial of captives we may gain insight into how Cahokians situated themselves and others in their world. This is evident in the differential mortuary context of Mound 72 as discussed below.

### **Rethinking the Mound 72 Mortuary context**

The Mound 72 story goes beyond the reflective representations of elite hierarchy and enactments of hero-figures that are popular in archaeological reconstructions, and also includes bioarchaeological clues that hint at social relationships. For instance, we can interpret the relative length of captivity of the females taken into Cahokia, which was seemingly short, and other behavioral clues; including the variations in mortuary rituals that can point to the contingent webbing of relationships being formed through the creative performances of Cahokian social realities (Schieffelin 1985). Mortuary performances illuminate some of the social distinctions made by Cahokians, as they

defined their identities as separate from those they imposed on their captives. These distinctions are visible in the spatial relations and positioning of captive bodies. We need to remember that the captives in Mound 72 were not held nor were treated as a monolithic group, and the differences between these groups should not be interpreted as variations in socio-economic status.

### *Economic Models and Captive Identity*

The majority of burials within Mound 72 have fallen to the side of the interpretations of this mortuary context because of the focus on the shell-bird burial group. The then *othered* burials include: four mass female graves (N=128 females), a charnel house group, a group of male sacrifices, the mass burial of a mixed-sex group with 39 individuals (Feature 229 lower), the non-killed burials (individuals and groups), and groups of subsequent “intrusive” burials. This is a result of being locked into theories that link socio-economic status with burial performance, reducing the majority of burials in Mound 72 to social capital (Porubcan 2000). That is, they were killed to reify the status positions and socio-political power of those contained in the elaborate shell-bird burials, without really problematizing why they were chosen specifically and were differentially buried. The distinctions are then glossed over and muted, even being seen as otherwise unimportant to pursue in research. We need to remember that even if the victims were interpreted by Cahokians as equivalent to the material status of grave goods that it is through the context of their captivity and their deaths that they gained materialized identities.

Status interpretations that are reliant on the interment of socio-economic or socio-

political symbols do not offer the best models to understand the relationships within Mound 72, because of the presence of captives. Further, these models assume that the status and roles of the individuals are directly reflected in burials, which is a concept that is critiqued in detail in chapter seven. There is no way to interpret how the captives were positioned in their own society or if that would even be a relevant line of thinking in this prehistoric context. Being captives may place these individuals into a unique category within the society of their captors, but this may be more akin to the reconstructed identities of modern displaced individuals, such as refugees (Malkki 1995) than that of the “low status” or non-elite individual groupings. We should not assume that low status or non-elite individuals at Cahokia shared the same social ranking of captives. By allowing our eyes to continually fixate on the elaborate shell-bird burials, we are further reducing, materializing and objectifying these captives (Rabasa 2000).

It is problematic to assume that all prehistoric populations interacted with their captives identically. This ignores historic and ethnohistoric accounts that demonstrate great diversity in treatment based on both the captors and their captives’ personal interactions, and the context in which the captives were taken (Cole 2000; Demos 1994; Driver 1966). For instance, the female captives were not just victims of capture and relocation, but through comparisons made with historic captivity data these females could have been taken during a raid or warfare event, then were kept in unknown conditions for an unknown period of time. Later they were killed and interred in various sand-lined pits throughout Mound 72. Their stories are likely vastly different than the “retainer” sacrifices associated directly with the shell-bird burials who were potentially participating in an honor-gaining strategy for the families of willing participants, similar to those

recorded Le Page du Pratz involving the 18<sup>th</sup> century Natchez (Rose 1999; Swanton 1911). This is suggested because this group was not biologically distinctive from the shell-bird individuals, and retainer rituals were known to occur within southeastern populations. Therefore, their bio-distance, or rather closeness, would allow these individuals to participate in kinship-based honor rituals that the foreign females could not participate. Furthermore, this participation in prestige-gaining strategies may not have simply benefited the survivors, but retainers may have gained access to a higher quality diet at Cahokia as evidenced by Burial 12 (Ambrose et al. 2003). This burial was of a retainer, who was killed with the shell-bird burials, and Burial 12, had access to a highly nutritious diet. The “retainer” burials are distinctive from the others killed and included into this mortuary context.

#### *Captivity in the Southeast During the Early Historic Period*

Throughout the historic period in the New World, there are many recorded instances of captive taking events that are related to warfare. These accounts included the capture and captivity of Europeans, but also at times contain descriptive accounts of indigenous captives taken from other native populations. In Florida, between 1699-1706, Thomas Nairne wrote about the Yamasee raids (Gallay 2002:65, 127-128). Here, indigenous groups sought to capture and enslave members of other indigenous populations gained through forceful means. In some cases, those captured were kept by the raiding populations, in others, the captive individuals were available to Europeans to purchase and keep as slaves. Importantly, Europeans could only acquire indigenous slaves if they were considered enslaved during “just wars,” if they were criminals, or had

inherited their slave status. Therefore, the raids offered the justification for the enslavement of some indigenous persons.

Frequently, captives in these accounts were females and children, and were sometimes eligible for adoption by their captor's population. If the captors were traveling long distances, they would sometimes kill individuals who could not make the journey easily or would otherwise slow the group while they were retreating to the safety of their village (Cole 2000; Demos 1994; Driver 1966). Any adoption ceremony would occur in the presence of the rest of the captor group, and implicit in these accounts was the idea that if a captive (particularly if female or a child) arrived at their captors' village that they were more often than not included into the population, as either adoptive members, or as slaves. This would not be without exception, as there are many cases of revenge captivity and killings, but does not fit well with these data. There is no evidence that Cahokians were attacked prior to construction of Mound 72 to explain a vengeance cycle, and the magnitude of the Mound 72 events are larger than what would be expected.

An interesting note about reactions to my interest in these killed females, is that several scholars have expressed to me that this burial group is not about female denigration. I have been reminded that women were viewed highly in the Mississippian world as evidenced by artworks and burial treatments, and overall I agree with these interpretations. However, *these* women were certainly not elevated in their status, and we need to recall that these were female captives brought in from outlying sites to be killed for ceremonial or secular reasons, or both. There were distinctions created to define Cahokian females versus non-Cahokian females who were clearly expendable as living members of the population. This is not the same situation of the Natchez or Taensa

sacrifices, where relatives were sacrificed to accompany spouses, and/or great leaders; or infants were immolated to appease angry deities (Gallay 2002:118-122; Swanton 1911). Rather, if these females were ceremoniously killed and these killings were not warfare related, but rather to appease a deity, or human leader that demanded human sacrifices, there is little reason to assume that they gained any status for themselves or their families due to their outsider status. Furthermore, there is no reason to assume that they shared the beliefs of their captors, and they may have resisted their inclusion into this mortuary performance.

### **The Differential Burials of Captives: Performances of Social Distance**

In this section, I am focused on the social and biological distances evident in the burials of the groups killed at Cahokia. These groups are by no means uniform, and as mentioned earlier, not all were locals from Cahokia. This is where the mortuary program begins to get exceptionally interesting. To clarify, not all females are captives; not all mass graves contain captives; not all mass graves contain females. However, in the Mound 72 case, captivity was primarily a female phenomenon, and composed a large percentage of the burial population in the mound (Rose 1999:77).

Before delving in more deeply, I need to define how I perceive and include individuals into the category of captive. Individuals that I include into this category are those who were coerced into social roles that were not only undesirable, but that often included both mentally and physically abusive treatment. Differences in the roles and treatment of captives from the ethnohistoric data derived from the Eastern Woodlands and Plains populations demonstrate that these captive positions can include: those of

servitude; use of the physical body as vessel for soul displacement; captives to be killed for demanding deities; and those who are taken to replace, but not embody the soul of lost members of a kin-group (Gallay 2002; Hall 1997). Here the female captivity was short, and there is no reason to support interpretations of prestige models.

Captivity is suggested for the killed females interred in mass-graves in Mound 72 for several reasons. First, all of the females were young, and relatively healthy. In fact, this is why Jerome Rose (1999) discussed the possibility that they were selectively chosen based on their perceived beauty. Individuals who were visibly ill or marred (at least on the osteological level) were not included with these female groups. There were, for example, no indications that the periostitis that was present in this data-set was a result of the prevalence of infectious disease such as treponematosiis, which is the non-venereal form of syphilis that was a rising ailment through the growing communities of the Middle Mississippian (Powell 2000). This is very interesting, as treponemal infections were present at nearby sites (Milner 1991; Milner et al. 1990; Steadman 2008), and given Cahokia's large population, treponemal infections would likely have been present. These females were either chosen for inclusion because they did not display the visible wounds from these infections, or they were brought from a population that was not experiencing high rates of treponematosiis, or from outside the Cahokian hinterlands.

The assessment that these females were “fairly healthy” counters the conventional interpretation about the health of the captive females based on their carious dental afflictions, and on the limited and non-severe presence of tibial periostitis (Ambrose et al. 2003; Pauketat 2009). Although these females apparently ate more maize than other individuals buried in the mound, and as a result were more likely to develop dental caries,



simply assigning them to low health may not accurately portray their overall well-being (Table 6.1). This is particularly evident when discussing other pathologies that these females may have encountered, but were not personally suffering as evidenced in the comparison between rates of periostitis and hyperostosis that were not significantly elevated in the non-Cahokian females. Additionally, the assumption that nutritional constraints automatically benefit the elites in a ranked society is problematic.

	Periostitis		Hyperostosis	
	+	-	+	-
<b>Cahokians</b> N=31	12.90%	87.09%	3.22%	96.77%
<b>Non-Cahokians Female Captives</b> N=96	10.41%	89.58%	12.50%	87.50%

Table 6.1 Cahokian and non-Cahokians rates of periostitis and hyperostosis. The Cahokian group is composed of those interpreted as middle status and elite by Rose (1999). I merged the middle and high status individuals from Rose's (1999) data as there were no indications that these populations were from outside the mound center at Cahokia.

An interesting feature about the Mound 72 female captives, learned from the interpretation of dental and dietary analyses described in the following section (Ambrose et al. 2003; Cohen 1974) is that these women were outsiders to Cahokia. This could be further researched using strontium in a stable isotope study, but is beyond the scope of this project. It also would not be immune to critique. The stable isotope study is highly dependent on length of the individual's captivity. For the isotope study to be most effective, the females would have to be using a different source of water up until the time of their death, which is not likely given their status as captives. However, if they were killed nearly immediately from when they were captured then the strontium signature

would likely still remain. Alternatively, if the females demonstrate a change in water source between childhood (from the strontium taken from the teeth) and recent adulthood (isotope evidence is derived from the bone) then this could further support the theory that these females were imported, or that they immigrated into Cahokia after childhood, but before they were killed (Alt 2006, 2010). Further, this isotopic date would currently yield too little new data to justify the destruction of human remains, and still could leave the question of where these women were from unanswered. I am not saying that we should not pursue further isotope data at a later date, but at this point, what population it should be compared to is unknown, and so we should be conservative in how we approach destructive procedures.

By focusing this discussion on the distinctions being made between the female captive groups who came from a biologically distinct population and other captives at Cahokia—namely those in Feature 229 lower, Feature 106, and those interpreted as retainers (Rose 1999) in the Sub 1 structure—we can begin to piece together a variety of imposed identities. Which means that these imported females do not and even should not be made to fit into models of the social hierarchy, status, and ranks that were evident at Cahokia as a whole. It is likely that they were treated differently based on their outsider status, as well as their shared female characteristics, and gender identities.

It is curious, but not entirely strange that there were no visible indications of violence on the remains of any of the female captives who were interred without males. This does not negate the possibility that their bodies were subjected to physical violence, only that these actions did not produce pathological lesions. What we know is that these females were brought into Cahokia and were killed shortly after. This is partially

evidenced by the lack of healed pathological lesions that may be suggestive of long-term captivity (Cole 2000; Demos 1994; Wilkinson 1997). It is also supported by their limited age ranges and the maintenance of distinct diets. Basically, their captivity did not last long enough for there to be homogenizing changes in their body chemistry. This is of course assuming that they would have shared food with Cahokians based on the abundant availability of food resources in the local area. The inclusion of these captive females in this important mortuary context opens interesting topics for discussion such as: social distancing, ethnicity, and our ability to detect differential gendered violence in the prehistoric record. When explored together, these biological data begin to point to a biological history that deserve inclusion into the literature.

#### *Paleopathological Evidence of Distance*

For those who are less familiar with all the variations in the mass graves in Mound 72, the individuals in Feature 229 lower were violently killed and were dumped into this pit before some of the individuals had even died (Fowler et al. 1999; Rose 1999). Fingers curled and dug into the sand of the lined pit below, as others waited for their imminent demise to arrive in succession. They witnessed the deaths of others as they waited for their own. Compared to the other burials in Mound 72, the burial group in Feature 229 lower appears chaotic, messy, and is largely distinctive from the other killed individuals, namely the females who were also included within mass graves in the mound. This might indicate that they breached cultural rules, and were then punished by receiving less care in their mortuary arrangement, or this could be an example of a community who were internal captives at Cahokia. In other words, their biological

connections to others included in this mortuary complex did not reduce their social distinctions, and as such they were more violently killed than the externally acquired females, but not as part of a prestige-gaining strategy. These individuals were not physically tortured for a length of time prior to their dramatic inclusion into this mortuary context that would be expected if these individuals were gaining prestige. Also it is important to remind ourselves before we move onto the bioarchaeological analysis that this group was interred much later than the shell-bird burials and therefore the comparisons to the Natchez retainers are reduced for this particular group.

Bioarchaeological analyses can and do support cultural distance evidence. For example, studies of dentition and diet, support ideas that the females interred in the four mass graves were captives imported into Cahokia. Janice Cohen's report (1974) concludes that many if not all of these killed female victims were from an unknown, but clearly separate population. Additionally, the dental data for individuals included in Feature 229 lower, links these individuals to the same population as the individuals in litter burials above, and supports the idea that the females mass graves were captives from a separate population unrelated to those in this later (AD 1150) feature. Namely, these females appear unrelated to the Feature 229 upper burials (the litter burials) based on their dental morphology (Cohen 1974; Rose 1999:81-82). Beyond saying that these females were from outside the reproductive pool of the "elites" from Mound 72, little has been theorized about where exactly they came from. Are they from Cahokia, but from a community that lacked sexual access to the individuals that have been interpreted as elites? Or are they as Rose (1999: 82) suggests, from an outside population, as tribute or trophies? The dental distinctions point to the latter, especially when viewed along with

the dietary data. These data demonstrate that there were population differences, but these should not be simply read as ethnic boundaries as seen in some bioarchaeological interpretations (Kakaliouras 2010; Ousley et al. 2009; Sparks and Jantz 2003). Ethnicities are not fixed biological phenomena, but are flexible social categories used to both define in-group members and to distinguish outsiders. Of course there are distinctions between phenotypic population markers, however, these should not be conflated with the socially defined categories, including the category of ethnicity. Instead, bioarchaeological research interested in ethnicity should look more to symbolic differences that are further supported by dietary distinctions. These can be compared to differences from dental or cranial biodistance, resultant from gene flow, but still cannot and should not be read as ethnicity (Armstrong and Van Gerven 2003).

Indirectly, the dietary research based on maize and protein consumption at Cahokia (Ambrose et al. 2003; Hedman 2006; Yerkes 2005) is supportive of an external location where females were captured. The dietary findings demonstrate that these captive females ate more maize, and less protein than others interred in the mound. It is possible that these differences represent a distinct foodway (Brown and Mussell 1985). When completed, many of skeletal remains could not provide isotopic samples that were considered reliable. Therefore, the sample size for this project was very limited (N=9). Despite the limited sample size, Ambrose et al.'s (2003) analysis did demonstrate that there were dietary differences in maize consumption within individuals interred in the mound. An interesting result of their research demonstrated that Burial 12—a likely retainer burial that was included in Feature 101, the shell-bird burial arrangement—participated in a high protein, low corn diet that was seen as restricted to elite members of

societies. What this points to is that either, we should not attempt to directly link dietary status and health to social position, and at least recognize these instances of discrepancies, or this could point to an additional benefit or motivation to participate in retainer positions in Mississippian populations.

While Ambrose et al. (2003) interpret these data as signifying gendered and class based diets, it may instead be explained as differences between populations' foodways (Brown and Mussell 1985; Yerkes 2005). For instance, when Richard Yerkes (2005) expanded the isotope analysis to include sites in Cahokia's hinterlands he found that the population at Cahokia ate less maize than their neighbors.

The stable isotope studies do not support the claim that depletion of deer populations on the American Bottom forced the Cahokians to increase their maize consumption. In fact, the delta  $^{13}\text{C}$  values for the early Mississippians (A.D. 1000-1150) at Cahokia are less positive than values obtained from Mississippian burials at sites in Cahokia's hinterland (Table 1). The bone chemistry data suggest that the residents of Cahokia consumed less maize and ate more meat than the inhabitants of outlying sites. (Yerkes 2005:249)

This is further supported by Kirstin Hedman's (2006) research on late period Cahokian diets that also indicated that various sites consumed more corn than others. Furthermore, Hedman explored the role of biological sex and maize consumption with surprising results, namely that there were gendered differences in diets at some locations, such as the East St. Louis Quarry site that challenge some assumptions about male/female maize consumption. At the East St. Louis site, males ate more water fowl and maize than did their female counterparts. There is little reason to add the additional assumption of elite versus non-elite diets in the Mound 72 case. In fact, the dietary difference further supports the idea that the killed females were not from a closely neighboring population, and were not from the local Cahokia mound area. These dietary data further distance these females from inclusion into status and rank positions that were available to native

Cahokians. This does not negate, nor diminish the results from isotope analyses. Instead, it is moving the discussion toward distinctions that may have emerged between cultural groups and their diets that may indicate ethnic foodways (Brown and Mussell 1985) and differential gender access at some locales.

At this juncture it is relevant to note that dietary data should not be assumed to universally mark status relationships, even if it is inferred that the population is a hierarchically ranked society, as they were at Cahokia. There are no universally held cultural rules that state that protein from meats are universally restricted to elite diets. The focus on meat consumption and the activity of hunting is most likely derived from the European bias in the interpretation of these data, and actually played a large role in the creation of the myth of the *noble savage* (Ellingson 2001). “The proprietors were not unlike most other Englishmen in holding Indian hunting in contempt. In England, hunting was a sport reserved for the elite; it rankled the English to see Indians partake in an activity reserved to the wellborn in their own society” (Gallay 2002:44). Hunting was an elite activity in Europe during this age of exploration, and when Native Americans were seen hunting, it was assumed that they too were from a class of nobility—not noble in the sense of a romantic stoicism that developed later in encounters (Rabasa 2000), but truly as descendants of chiefly lineages (Ellingson 2001; Gallay 2002). Also, without distinguishing the protein signatures from marine versus terrestrial protein sources researchers may not catch dietary distinctions. A further complication is not being able to recognize differences in animal protein consumption from highly valued versus lowly valued cuts of meat, which is known to be distinguished in some historic accounts.

Furthermore, the relationship between maize consumption and anemia is more

complex than some bioarchaeological studies present. The over-consumption of maize, or when it is not combined with additional protein sources can result in the reduced intestinal absorption of consumed proteins. This reduced absorption can potentially lead to cases of anemia (Larsen 1997). Certain types of anemia can leave pathological indications including cribra orbitalia and porotic hyperostosis, and recent research demonstrates how these can result not just from iron deficiencies but also from folic acid, a B vitamin deficiency (Walker et al. 2009). Additionally, deficiencies can also result from the presence of parasites and worms (*trematodes*), which are known environmental issues for agriculture populations. Parasites and plants with high phytate levels, such as maize, can inhibit iron absorption (Larsen and Sering 2000:127).

Despite variations in diet, these captive females were in otherwise decent health. This is especially evident when we consider the patterns of their pathological lesions. A few of these females were at times afflicted by conditions that lead to cribra orbitalia and porotic hyperostosis, but at the time of their deaths there were no severe cases (Rose 1999) and none that were suggestive of treponematosi. This could indicate that if the cribra orbitalia and porotic hyperostosis were directly related to anemic conditions that this group was not kept in captivity with a poor diet for an extended length of time, but that these particular conditions within the group may have resulted from low folic acid consumption (Walker et al. 2009).

It is also fascinating that these females had relatively low periostitis rates which were becoming increasingly prevalent at some urbanizing locations during the Middle Mississippian (Lallo 1973; Powell 2000). Tibial lesions that are sometimes indicative of infection from treponematosi, the non-venereal form of syphilis (Larsen 1997; Milner



and Buikstra 2006: 635; Powell 2000; Powell and Cook 2005) were not pronounced in these females (i.e., no saber shins, nor severe lesions on the examined crania and extremities were observed). Although treponematosiis is not dependent on population size like some diseases (i.e., measles) it is highly communicable person-to-person, and could spread very quickly in more densely populated areas, like at Cahokia. The Mound 72 captive females (and the remainder of individuals interred in the mound) had surprisingly low rates of reactive tibial lesions compared to other contemporary sites like Dickson Mounds (Lallo 1973). This comparatively low rate of periostitis could indicate that these females were not exposed to the same pathological conditions prevalent in other populations at this time.

In addition to the risks of exposure to infectious diseases like treponematosiis, these females were living during a period that may have experienced increases in chronic infections related to the rising rates of sedentism and reliance on agriculture, such as infections from parasites (Cohen 1989; Larsen 1997; Larsen and Sering 2000; Steckel and Rose 2002). These conditions were also underrepresented in these females. When combined, these pathological data may point to social distinctions being formed between these captives and their captors that are suggestive of limited interactions between these social groups.

### *Cultural Evidence of Social Distance*

The Mound 72 burials further indicate that models that rank levels of physical violence based on concepts of bio-distance are a poor proxy for social distance. Acts of violence were more visibly enacted on the individuals in Feature 229 lower, and even on

the four handless-headless males (Feature 106) who were more closely related to their captors. This demonstrates that there was not a positive correlation between visible violence and the bio-distance of the captive populations to their captors. This illuminates interpretive problems between the biological and cultural data that should not be confused with each other. It is possible that females were harmed in ways that would not leave marks in their skeletal remains (humiliation, rape or violence to the soft tissues would not necessarily survive for later interpretation).

Gender distinctions in patterns of violence are known in historic captive accounts from North America (Cole 2000; Demos 1994; Driver 1966) and in modern contexts (Malkki 1995). Given the differential burial treatment and bodily treatment of the captive females and other captives in Mound 72 it cannot be ruled out from the data as a structuring principle. Differences between female, male, and mixed interments could serve as a reminder that when populations create gender, ethnic, and other social classifications, the social distance (Hinton 1996) being constructed may not represent a one-to-one analogy with the biological distance of populations. We may never know if some captives were treated differently because they were female, because they were not native to Cahokia, or for both reasons. Given the historic accounts of captive experiences, including the revisions that were evident in some of these accounts, there are notable distancing practices of individuals from specific forms of violence that could reduce their reincorporation into their own communities. Admission of having been raped, by both male and female captives, and the use of physical force by females in order to flee were often filtered out from reported accounts by individuals (Cole 2000:51-52). These are preserved in these narratives as third person experiences.

Additionally, the cause of death of the female captives is not clearly marked by physical evidence. It is likely that they were poisoned, or poisoned and strangled (Rose 1999). Here the descriptions of “black drink” (Hudson 1979) and ideas of cultural competency come to mind. The practice of drinking and subsequent ritual regurgitation of the yaupon holly (*Illex vomitoria*) is documented in southeastern populations since the early historic period. Archaeological evidence of ritual shell cups found in Hopewell and Mississippian graves extend the evidence of use further back in time. If the females were given black drink that contained additional lethal ingredients, and had not regurgitated it, they would not only been singled out as distinct, but this may have cost them their lives (Figure 6.1). Although this example was of course speculative, it may help explain how so many females died with so little trauma to their remains. Ultimately, what we can say is that these females did not die of natural causes as indicated by their limited age ranges, and they were interred with no observable evidence of long-term abuse.



Figure 6.1 Eastern Timucua black drink ceremony. Engraving by Theodor de Bry. Plate XXIX from the *Kraus Collection of Sir Francis Drake*. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress. Modified by author.

The intentional selection of young, reproductive females that were brought in from an outside population(s) to participate in lethal rituals, requires us to discuss violent acts that are infrequently discussed when talking about prehistoric violence; namely selective massacres and genocidal behaviors. Continued selection and use of external females (although the exact date ranges on the four female mass graves are debated) for lethal rituals during the AD 1000-1050 range, may strengthen the idea that populations were targeted for reduced reproductive success. My point is that these females were not simply “ritually killed,” but were killed for reasons that are beyond typical warfare practices, and should be included in this discussion because, as in this case, so many reproductive females from outside populations were clearly selected to be killed, which is a genocidal action. This selection would have significant effects on the population(s) from which these females were taken. This is discussed in greater detail in chapter eight. Suffice it to say that these should not be viewed as mutually exclusive behaviors. Again, warfare or raiding would have been the likely mechanism to gain access to external females, so regardless if these killed female captives at Cahokia were part of a “ritual” or “ceremonious” sacrificial killing or as a genocidal act that targeted reproduction, the point is that these are not discrete. Violent acts should not be viewed as mutually exclusive categories because they often overlap.

### **Differential Captivity**

Reasons behind one's captivity may influence how the body is treated and used in the mortuary. These reasons may not be reconstructed without written or oral support; however, their presence could be indicated by the differences evident in the actions

performed on various groups of captive bodies. These differences indicate how Cahokians physically situated and used the bodies of their captives to create and enact their social realities. There were both local and non-local captives included in the Mound 72 burial group who should be analyzed separately, as they were differentially included in this mortuary context for varied purposes and with variations in what they were intended to represent or embody.

The “neat” arrangement of the females in layered rows, separated by woven mats, and lack of physical stress (infection or abuse), may indicate that the physical appearance of their bodies was an important selection characteristic being made by the Cahokians for inclusion of specific females in this mortuary performance, or these females could represent the healthiest females who survived a long journey following their capture. Their “neatness” marks a clear distinction between their mode of death and the killing of the mixed-sex group (Feature 229 lower). The latter group was killed at the grave site—some still being alive as they fell into the burial pit. These individuals were not neatly arranged. Instead their bodies fell into their shared grave following their rather systematic bludgeoning on the back of their skulls with a large, blunt object. The force exerted by the executioner(s) resulted in the decapitation of three individuals, and the partial decapitation of a fourth. These individuals were not killed to gain access to trophy limbs (Owsley and Berryman 1975; Smith 1997), and were not selected based on gender lines. (The apparently accidental removal of heads was indicated by the heads being thrown into the pit with the burials.) These captives were distinct from both the four headless/handless males and the non-mutilated female groups.

Feature 229 lower also greatly contrasts with the burials located directly above

(Feature 229 upper). The above burials are separated from the lower by wooden planks and are buried in a neat row containing litters. Cohen's (1974) dental analysis demonstrated that these two groups were biologically similar to each other. The visibly violent deaths and messy arrangement of this group continues to challenge conventional interpretations that lump all the groups of killed individuals in Mound 72 to the shell-bird burial. The striking juxtaposition between the upper and lower portions of this feature is likely to represent a performance of the structured cosmos (sky-earth world and dome imagery). It is important to note that there are no other archaeologically known burial groups from the Mississippian that closely resemble this late (AD 1100-1150) feature in Mound 72 with such a stark contrasting arrangement. When Feature 229 is divided into upper and lower components only then can we recognize similarities to other burials. For instance, the upper portion is similar to a burial described in the 1931 report on the Powell Mound excavations at Cahokia (Ahler and DePuydt 1987:4) and the later period Caddoan litter burials at Spiro (Brown 1971, 1981). The dual layering is reminiscent of the layering in some of the killed female pits that were separated by matting, but this is much clearer in Feature 229.

The final group of captives that I will discuss was also distinguished from the imported females. This group is the four headless/handless males (Feature 106) who may represent a human platform associated with various cosmologically important events (Hall 2000). These four males were visibly mutilated, but I agree with Melvin Fowler et al. (1999:187) that this act should not automatically be assumed to be an act of degradation based on ethnohistoric knowledge of some indigenous honor-gaining rituals. This interpretation seems especially true since the mutilation was performed postmortem.

The sharp cutting close to the base of the skull demonstrates that care was taken to remove the head and the mode of death appears different from the deaths of the mixed group of Feature 229 lower. It is also likely that the skulls of these four males were used in other contexts, like in dedication ceremonies similar to the skull found in Jondro Mound (Fowler et al. 1999:178), or the hands found in an infant burial at Norris Farms 36 Cemetery (Santure et al. 1990:105). The careful cutting and absence of limbs supports ideas that these particular limbs were used for other purposes (outside the mound).

The symbolic positioning and body treatment of this group of males strongly resembles powerful cosmological ideas, which does not represent a unique form of burial in the Mississippian world (Fowler et al. 1999:187-189; Hall 2000; Harn 1980). The regional and cosmological significance of this burial is discussed in detail in Robert Hall's (2000) *Sacrificed Foursomes and Green Corn Ceremonialism*, where this feature is compared with a similar burial unearthed at the Dickson Mound site. Hall explores the cosmological myths that relate to this symbolism and were widespread in the Southeastern and Mesoamerican populations. Through mortuary performances, the captive identities of these four males seem transformed into something that appears distinct from other captives in Mound 72.

## **Summary**

To summarize, there have been great leaps in understandings of prehistoric violence and specifically in research about captivity, and further into the research that explores issues of imposed identity and new perspectives of status. The research involves patterns of human violence cross all subfields in anthropology, with each field

strengthening our knowledge in these important investigations. There are, however, glaring issues in the translational quality of concepts and use of descriptive categories of violence. These are not insurmountable obstacles, and the rewards of further collaboration will greatly enrich research in each area of specialty.

The complex data set from Cahokia's Mound 72 demonstrates the importance of joint-subfield research, as various forms of violence were enacted on the bodies of individuals and groups interred in a single mound context. By trying to define these behaviors as discrete forms of violence, we can obscure the understanding of this context. Instead we should recognize the overlaps in performances as relating to, but not directly reflecting how captors situate themselves and others while constructing these captor-captive relationships, while imposing their own realities onto those whom they dominated.



## **--CHAPTER SEVEN--**

### **INTERPRETING STATUS IN MORTUARY CONTEXT: ELDER, GENDER, ECONOMIC, SOCIO-POLITICAL, MYTHIC, CAPTIVE**

Representations of individualized status and population ranks have long been portrayed as intimately intertwined with mortuary contexts. These representations were forged in the then forward thinking of the New Archaeologists of the 1960's-70's. (Binford 1971; Goldstein 1980; Peebles and Kus 1977; Saxe 1970; Tainter 1975, 1978). The canon is, when we bury our dead we forever imprint their social rank and position—it is as inescapable as culture. Clear abundance of material grave goods, models of energy-expenditure, and the resultant reconstructions of social hierarchies used in mortuary constructions have been continuously viewed as clear demonstrations of the relationships between individuals and their corporate kin networks. These relationships can display that kin groups either had excess or disposable wealth to include in burials, or that they lacked disposable wealth. These simple relationships are frequently debated, but currently are employed in everyday contexts because, at first glance, they make sense. Even the theories that incorporate concepts of time and energy expenditure, or use theories of how people ritually enact memorials in a similar manner (Dillehay 1995; Tainter 1975, 1978), cannot accurately contextualize the relationships between the burials in Mound 72, who were interred throughout a 100-200 year time period with the associations and assumed relationships between large portions of the included population still being debated. The reflective models are used to model distinctions in social organization of ranked versus egalitarian societies. These theories stemming from the

New Archaeology had moved archaeological interpretations of mortuary contexts to new lengths that went beyond simple descriptions of the mortuary context (Dragoo 1963; Krober 1927) and into the realms of modeling and interpretive mortuary theory.

The myriad relationships between grave goods, rank, and status are not as simple as we once allowed our research to imply. The problematic application of these models as universally suitable are largely downplayed and ignored. With so few alternatives presented in its place that those who vocally recognize and express the problems with these assumptions begrudgingly continue to employ these models in archaeological settings (Dornan 2002; Goldstein 1981; Mainfort and Fisher-Carroll 2010; Shanks and Tilley 1987). On a practical level it is difficult to break away from these models when we encounter graves in the field, because as a culture we are very concerned with materiality. In other words, although the theoretical assumptions that surround the use of the status/role reflection-based models are consistently contested in the classroom, at conferences, and in writings, these models are so deeply ingrained in our archaeological toolkit that it is difficult to develop interpretive models outside of this framework that go beyond the uni-dimensional approaches (Gillespie 2001; Goldstein 1981). It is actually a daunting task to limit these comparisons between mortuary representation and the differential materiality in populations without relying on the economically driven representational models. More recent theoretical advances delve into the important issues of remembering, forgetting, narrative construction, performance, and placemaking corresponding with the death and burial of social group members (Alcock and Osborne 1994; Chesson 2001; Feld and Basso 1996; Pauketat 2010; Payton 2010; Shaw 2000). These theories have significantly contributed to the mortuary literature and to how

archaeologists construct past physical and social landscapes, and are appropriate in discussions of mortuary contexts.

The Cahokia example allows the mortuary interpretations to be flexible, because there are several competing behaviors that are visible in this assemblage that do not fit into traditional mortuary models. These behaviors include storytelling (mythic tableau), whether it is for the deities or the population itself is not clear, and these are constructed using the physical remains of individuals, foreigners and locals. Although this indicates that the Cahokians were arranging the remains to demonstrate how they saw themselves and others in the world (and how they saw the world itself), we will never obtain all the intricate details. This does not mean that we need to reduce the behavior to simplistic economic relationships. On the contrary, I suggest that we shift the interpretive focus onto other well-known associations in the burials. Namely, we should reorient the research to highlight the various actions of social inclusion/exclusion and violence that are incorporated into the constructive process of the collective identity that is visible in this mortuary setting. Furthermore, we need to use models that account for the heterogeneity included in this burial population. Models that assume that the mortuary context is a homogeneous group do not encapsulate the differential positions and relationships being constructed between these populations through the mortuary performances.

### **Representations of what?**

The issues with representation being assumed as directly reflective of social roles and statuses became exceptionally apparent when I began gathering the literature to

include in the research for this dissertation. Specifically, the interpretations of the data from Mound 72, Cahokia presented a scenario where the lines between status, representation, and meaning were blurred. Individuals within this mortuary context crossed the assumed status lines, and at times researchers attempted to directly relate these individuals to the oral traditions as *windows into personhood*, despite a clear need to interpret and translate (Brown 1981) the correlating data first. This translation process requires an in-depth deconstruction of the population, which is necessary to explore in heterogeneous burial populations where the representations and meanings associated with the dead—especially including the individuals who were biologically distinctive from the individuals performing the burials could vary greatly. These differences were filtered and the individuals were arranged according to the enactments of the burial performances by the people creating the visibly constructive social relationships. The arguments of material reflections of rank and status can be rethought in a mortuary context using this context at Cahokia as an example. The representations embedded into the mortuary performances of rank and social status are presented in the Mound 72 context (arrangements, associated goods, and treatment of individuals in death and burial). They are the social constructions of reality filtered through a Cahokian lens. Cahokians participating in these public performances, witnessed an enactment of their group level positions into the large social landscape; where they intentionally placed themselves in dominant roles in relationship to their captives (Porubcan 2000). These relationships are only knowable on a collective and not an individual level.

The more than 260 individuals buried within this small, ridge-top, marker mound were purposefully interred, with the majority who were excavated being buried under

three distinct sub-mound features. The differential arrangements and the overall arrangement of groups in these burials vary greatly for unknown reasons. However, there are indications that gender, age, natal community, and the performance of important relationships between the community and outerworld hero-figures were likely factors in the visible distinctions constructed in this cultural tableau (Brown 2005; Reilly 2010). The burials discovered during the excavations of Mound 72 from 1967-1971, forever altered the face of Southeastern archaeology. Forty years later, these burials still maintain the interest of budding archaeologists, even if they are at times frustratingly filled with questions about the unknowable relationships between people; most of these data lost in temporal and cultural translation.

If differential burials do not always indicate vertical status distinctions or wealth, nor if a society is ranked, then what do these differences demonstrate? That question has continued to arise since I was exploring the differential theoretical mortuary treatments in the Mound 72 burials that were heavily included in the literature as marking vertical statuses, roles, and positions. Martin Byers (2006) also grappled with this question, and as such, he reexamined the shell-bird burials in terms of the visible heterarchical (horizontal status) relationships instead of the hierarchical displays of rank. Here he is re-exploring the interpretation of these seemingly unique, and undoubtedly significant dual males contained in Mound 72. Byers (2006) interprets the roles and arrangement of individuals in this mortuary context as representative of larger cultural understanding of fertility and renewal rituals. This idea is also prevalent in the works and writings of Robert Hall. Thomas Emerson (2003) shifts his ideas away from wholly economic interpretations through the exploration of questions regarding religious thoughts and

shamanism, as evidenced by the symbols present in the material culture. James Brown (2005) also suggests that there is more to these burials than previously thought—this burial possibly represents chunkee player imagery that also removes the economic focus. These interpretations are steps in the right direction, but what about the rest of the burials in Mound 72? What do they represent?

Even with the theoretical focus shifting further from the presumably elite or otherwise significant members of society, many studies are still too focused on questions of displays of individual or corporate wealth as interpreted from these specific burials. As archaeologists, the materiality of some members within this burial group stand out, leading researchers to interpret these burials in prominent positions in their interpretations. They portray the shell-bird burials as the most significant individuals buried in this context. Perhaps this material focus corresponds with the ideas that Cahokians were embedding, or maybe it is a mistranslation. Furthermore, although the interpretations are moving away from the focus on the roles and positions of the shell-bird burials specifically, the shifted view still frequently maintains concepts of these mortuary performances as enacted in dedication to elite kin groups (Porubcan 2000). This context is constructed by Cahokians and non-Cahokians (others), as filtered through the visible social relationships displayed by these groups through the burial performances of the Cahokians as they created their social realities (Schieffelin 1985). We are not able to access the social constructions from all of the social positions in this context (and presumably in other similar contexts) where individuals are so heavily filtered to enact their positions as their captors desired, because they are subsumed to the dominant performance.

Although many of the social relationships are lost to time, there is still much that can be learned from this context. Specifically, using recent concepts of population level performances of identity and reality construction, we can begin to piece together how Cahokians enacted their positions of authority over non-group members who were brought in from far, but unknown distances. These distances, both social (Hinton 1996) and physical would likely increase the honor and prestige of the captors who conquered these distant and potentially otherworldly peoples (Sabo 2010, personal communication). Increasing the distance of where the non-local captives were brought in from, could have been a selective criteria, but this is an interpretive conjecture.

Several of primary goals of this chapter still remain: first, we need to explore the differential burials and the theories used to interpret these data in Mound 72 from a standpoint that the visible differences in burials may not simply indicate nor reflect economic status and political rank distinctions. Second, we need to continue to demonstrate why bioarchaeological evidence needs to be moved to a more visible role in interpretations. This shift in interpretation is essential, especially in this case where many of the individuals in the mortuary context would not even be included as part of the immediate social population at Cahokia (as they are genetically distinct populations), and therefore would not simply slip into the status and rank categories present for the Cahokian population. In fact, the killed foreign females would likely have their own unique status as captives that should not be interpreted as “low” or as “non-elite” status that often problematically directly includes them into the Cahokian status categories. I do not intend to dispute that they were clearly not treated as Cahokians, but simply that there is no way to tell how they were perceived in their natal community, nor how their

position shifted or was maintained by Cahokians if we continue to concentrate on their final representation that was imposed and arranged by their Cahokian captors.

### **Rethinking Status in Mound 72**

While the shell-bird burials (named for the enormous amount of shell beads that were used to make a cloak or platform between two male individuals) have often been thought of as completely unique within the Mississippian mortuary context contemporary to the early Mound 72 phases of construction, it is because our interpretations of these contexts often are reduced to socio-economic categories. In other words, we place a large amount of intellectual weight on the amount of grave goods that we assume are associated with singular individuals or groups of individuals, as is the case in Mound 72 (Fowler et al. 1999; Goldstein 2000: 200; Rose 1999). This strong socio-economic focus in mortuary analyses extends to the bioarchaeological studies, and no doubt stems from the current Western thought and value systems. Early theories in mortuary studies focused on heavy descriptions of material remains associated with burials, but did not pay much attention to the individuals buried. This materialistic focus later developed in an attempt to derive information about the social arrangement of sites through the interpretation of differential burials. These burials were categorized as indicative of ranked versus non-ranked societies (Gillepe 2001), which are important understandings, but were often postulated at the expense of other visible characteristics in the mortuary contexts. The drive for New Archaeology in the 1970's reified the assumed distinctions by deeming them as non-contestable, and unbiased scientific models (Binford 1971; Goldstein 1980; Saxe 1970; Renfrew and Shennan 1982; Tainter 1975), and as such they



have become naturalized in the field.

Reactions to economic models entered into the theoretical archaeology field in the 1980's and continue to emerge in the present (Carr 1995; Gillespie 2001; Hodder 1991, 1995; Pearson 1993; Shanks and Tilley 1987). The problem was and still remains that despite the critiques that bemoan the economically driven status models, researchers rely on them and use them as a catch-all, fail-safe in their own research. In part, these economic models are deeply entrenched in Western worldviews as important and they seem obvious, natural categories. Archaeologists are great quantifiers of material goods, and as such our productions of cultures are contingent on how we interpret these materials. This is not a novel notion for archaeologists, but as a whole the economically driven ideas have stuck in mortuary interpretations. When individuals obscure and resist status and other economic categories by, for instance, taking empty bottles of expensive perfume that they find and placing them in their own front yard to falsely portray access to these materials (something I observed while attending an ethnographic field school in Guatemala) the archaeological record becomes more skewed. Significantly, the models developed under the New Archaeology moved archaeology away from focusing solely on the description of the archaeological record; instead, they promoted the notions that we could and should interpret the past by applying the models that could link mortuary context to socially important phenomena such as social standing and prestige.

Even today, many non-archaeologists and archaeologists find the non-artifact rich burials boring or see little point in exploring the life-ways of these seemingly less important individuals beyond surface-level, cursory explanations. Our interests in elite versus non-elite social sectors produce these gaps. In the case of Mound 72, the majority

of burials are interpreted not just as low status, but additionally they are objectified as markers of the middle and high status burials. In other words, they are used as a large portion of the material evidence for indicating the status relationships in the mortuary context, and are used as evidence of Cahokia's overall complexity. Although the dead, particularly those used in public display, could demonstrate or bolster the status of others based on their relationship to the presumed elite, it is also likely that status in whatever terms (high, middle, low; elite, non-elite) is not the only possibility for burial representation. In practice it is rarely the only factor at play.

Though I do agree with many points included in recent critiques of mortuary theories, especially those that point at some interpretative complications in mortuary studies that problematically assume direct wealth and power representations, the idea of mortuary representation should not be entirely dismissed. As noted by Lynne Sullivan and Robert Mainfort (2010: 5), "Rituals surrounding the disposal of the dead, including interment, clearly entail more than a final exercise of duty-status relationships, and these rituals, by their very nature, embody more than conveying 'information about the status of the deceased.'" Interpretations should revisit these contexts not as mirrored reflections, but rather should use theoretical models that allow much more plasticity in these interpretations. As they reiterate from James Brown's (1981:30) eloquent description, the archaeological data need *translation*. The mortuary theorist should deftly connect the patterns visible in mortuary contexts to the cultural contexts, rather than assume simplistic economic wealth/status relationships between those burying the dead and the grave contents later analyzed by the archaeologist. It is often through the comparative interpretation of mortuary to living contexts that allow archaeologists to glean some data

about how those participating viewed and/or used the deceased (Pearson 1993). Although the social relationships visible in mortuary context are imposed statuses, roles, and even identities, they are nonetheless important for us to explore. Again, we should not assume that these are perfect reflections, nor that they offer a complete sense of personhood, which is not obtainable using archaeological methods alone. We simply do not have access to these data in the prehistoric context that can link individuals specifically to their positions in these societies. In the case of historically supported mortuary data (Gillespie 2001), these relationships are more available for discussion.

Following in the economically-driven tradition, bioarchaeologists and mortuary theorists alike continue to interpret grave goods as markers of elite versus non-elite status. While this interpretation makes it easier to understand differential burials, reducing them to “the ones with the most stuff must be the most powerful,” may not accurately portray these burials, nor should we assume the interpretation's universality. There are alternate scenarios that could be employed to explain why some individuals have grave goods and others do not. For instance, one could be attempting to dispose of unwanted reminders of an individual, and include them into the burial program. The reduction to status relations based on grave goods can hide meanings that may otherwise be recognizable (even to those with limited cultural coherence, such as with an archaeological population) when viewing burials. For example, the four headless males at the Dickson Mound site are interred with their own grave goods that are clearly linked to the skeletal remains; they have pots placed where their heads had once been, yet these are not interpreted simply as status markers for good reason (Fowler et al. 1999; Hall 1997; O'Brien 1994; Pauketat and Emerson 1997). Instead, these pots are interpreted as

representing aspects of cosmological relationships. If researchers had been taking a strictly economic approach it becomes more difficult (but not impossible) to connect the Dickson Mound foursome burials with the four headless, handless males in Mound 72 for the simple reason that the latter were not interred with pots in place of their heads, and the Cahokia four did not show evidence of burning; a significant feature in the interpretation of their meaning (Hall 2000:248). Furthermore, distancing these two very similarly arranged burial groups is that the hands of the Cahokia four were removed, while those of the Dickson four were intact.

There were two principal differences in the two graves. The Mound 72 foursome were missing their hands as well as their heads; the Dickson Mounds foursome were provided with pottery vessels at or next to where their heads should have been, and a fire had been built over the bodies, partially cremating them. (Hall 2000:248)

However, the arrangement of the Dickson Mound foursome with their interlocked arms and overall appearance of their arrangement are remarkably similar to Feature 106 at Cahokia. In fact, this is what links the Dickson Mound group to these other features. It is their arranged pose, not their artifacts that connect these to the larger mythic performance. Robert Hall's (2000) exploration of the symbolic representations of the sacrificed foursomes reveals ties to multiple important ritual events spanning from the Eastern Woodlands to Mesoamerica, as discussed in earlier chapters. Here the posed positions of the bodies take the forefront, and perhaps should be more readily included into other mortuary studies, compared to the heavy focus on associated grave good analyses.

To be as fair as possible, many bioarchaeologists continue to explore the health, diets, and physical behaviors of as many individuals as they can, regardless of their interpretations of the socio-economic status of the individuals, but the material focus is

far too prevalent in these interpretations. Actually, bioarchaeologists may even seek these dietary and health distinctions, because there is an assumption that there are universal differences in the access to high quality foods that will negatively effect the health of non-elite members of populations without really evaluating the overall diet available in particular locations. Moreover, there are still many researchers who are tied into these same mortuary interpretations that play “rank by numbers,” which does not make interpretive sense in every situation. Sometimes more is no more than just more. The over-reliance on using mortuary analysis to demonstrate the social organization of past societies is evident in the descriptions of ranked societies like Cahokia, where the burial interpretations are used to define the social ranks. Not all ranked societies display ranking through their economic acquisition of material goods, and furthermore, grave goods do not simply reflect the economically derived status relationships, but encapsulate other social relationships as well (Binford 1962; Gillespie 2001; Goldstein 2000).

Even more understudied in its implications for bioarchaeologists are ideas involving the social mediation(s) of ethnicity. Distinctions can be created and maintained within populations that have forged marriage arrangements between members and would, over time, potentially share much in the way of biology. However, genetic material still cannot override these concepts as socially constructed categories. While bioarchaeologists may interpret population differences as ethnic distinctions such as diet or genetic markers that are sometimes passed on in populations' genetic material, other surviving symbolic inclusions are not likely to be recognized in the same way in which the bioarchaeologist assumes that these categories are constructed. Bioarchaeologists deal directly with the human remains and are able to reconstruct some genetic markers that are

passed on within populations. The concept of ethnicity, for the bioarchaeologist, is constructed on the premise that there are biocultural memberships that define populations. In other words, bioarchaeologists tend to interpret ethnicity as based on a shared kinship (Buikstra 2005) that is bounded and reconstructable through tracing genetic markers when not based on fictive kinship. The confusion of biological populations and ethnicity involves a conflation of genetic materials passed through populations and inter-group dietary distinctions that can overlap with the socially constructed ethnic groups as seen in stylistic and morphological distinctions between artifacts used by the members of biologically distinguished populations. This overlap is important and should be further developed in new research. Even if members of populations are producing children and passing on their genetic material this does not limit the possibility of multi-ethnic unions, but there are difficulties and these relationships are sometimes impossible for the bioarchaeologist to reconstruct. For instance, in the case of Burundi and Rwanda, socially recognized categories and assumed biological distinctions (these were assumed based on ethnic categories) clashed. Here there were several levels of identity construction that relied heavily on the biological distinctions to justify violent interactions between Hutu and Tutsi, but ultimately the biology had surprising little to do with ethnicity (Malkki 1995; Lemarchand 1997). Rather the ethnic categories were socially constructed and mediated, long after population distinctions were blurred, and fall into the realms of imagined communities and the performance of ethnic identity.

Identification of individual inclusion into a specific category requires the examination of identification cards, and includes the performance of identity. Does this

mean that distinctions in the social categories do not exist? Of course they do! They are so deeply imbedded into the population that it led to widespread unrest, and the identities of distinction were created on both biological and social lines. The ongoing nature-culture debate remains in the questions involving the boundedness of populations, and we are continuously reminded of just how complicated it is to define for any given individual or group (D'Alisera 2004). An unbounded view of populations definitely presents a theoretical wrench in the spokes for both bioarchaeologists and mortuary theorists. The problem remains on the interpretive level, where population distinctions are frequently interpreted through socio-economic archaeological proxies (i.e., through the quantification of artifacts associated with burial), and in some cases are then seen as markers of ethnicity. This is a recognized problem in bioarchaeology, marked by a shift in the vocabulary used to describe these distinctions. There is a recent avoidance to using the socio-economic bound terms of high, middle, and low status. Instead, some scholars favor the terms “elite” versus “non-elite” in describing differential burials. These categories work in some cases, and are useful descriptions to explore and explain social rank. However, rank categories should not be assumed as universally shared or as the structural component in burials, even in ranked societies. This problem becomes particularly apparent in populations who engage in practices that include reenacting their cosmological relationships in site construction; where economically derived ranks should not automatically be interpreted as more visible than the performance of other social identities. Actually, it seems a little presumptuous to assume that rankings of each individual are defined during practices representational of the cosmic relations. Individual rankings and personae would likely be hidden, or emphasized in ways to

connect more closely to the mythic performance, which does not remove individual rank from the burial performance entirely, but points to the larger social relationship that is being articulated in the enactment. The construction of the cosmic relationship is both representational and ongoing, while the burial of individuals is a finite process (even when extended into stages). This relationship extends beyond the life of the individuals, and it can be widespread in multiple populations; as are the mythic cycles noted as included in the Mound 72 context. The hero-twin and Red-Horn traditions are very widespread, as are the myriad representations of bird-man.

It is a little ironic because ranked societies are often defined archaeologically by the presence of differential burials (Peebles and Kus 1977), but if the differences in burials point to something other than hierarchical social ranks, the archaeological record becomes more complex and difficult to understand (Byers 2006; Sullivan and Mainfort 2010). Without completely removing these economically derived concepts that have such deep roots in archaeological constructions, I think we need to be more critical in our interpretations of mortuary contexts instead of reliant on the economic theories. Even if there are differential burials present, we cannot assume that they represent hierarchical relationships, nor should we assume that differential burials are indicative of personal rank or wealth. There is no reason to even exclude notions that these status regalia were costumes worn by dancers or other personal material adornments that carried sentimental values, rather than symbols of social power held by the individuals in life.

Interestingly, if we move away from the economic and hierarchical interpretations of rank and refocus our attention toward mythic and secular performances of group identity in burials, then we can better understand that the Lubbub Creek site in Alabama



and the bird-man posed individuals (Burials 161 and 118) at the George C. Davis site in Texas, which contained similar burial imagery to those observed in the shell-bird burials in Mound 72. The bird-man pose has the arms and legs stretched out and curved downward. It is similar to the pose in paintings of bird-men in caves and other artworks. When discussing the shell-bird burials at Cahokia, Paula Porubcan (2000:213) reminds readers that the “reposed” or “lifeless” falcon motif is found in other later contexts, however, this theme is also present in earlier contexts, and is very widespread (Sabo, personal communication 2008, Schambach 2010, personal communication). This could indicate an alternate performance of this regional motif (Lankford 2007a). It is likely that this link between the shell-bird burials and other similarly symbolic relationships has not been articulated by other researchers primarily due to the lack of grave goods present compared to the shell-bird burials. For instance, there is a burial at Lubbub that is not nearly as elaborate as the shell-bird burials from Cahokia, but includes a similar burial performance. The Lubbub site in Alabama includes a burial mound group with thirty-six individuals. Of particular importance here, it contains the interment of two extended males who were placed one on top of the other with a copper plate depicting a bird—specifically a raptor—between them (Bridges et al. 2000:39). The regional motif is then about the presence of two males associated with a raptor bird, and like the pots in place of crania in the Dickson Mound, there is likely more meaning behind the copper plate than an economically derived status interpretation would allow archaeologists to recognize. This refocusing is not to deny that the shell-bird burials in Mound 72 seem much more elaborate to us than the copper-bird burials, but this demonstrates our focus on these categories of socio-economic distinctions may or may not be as important as we assume.

Furthermore, when discussing the relationship between status and intentional killings, it cannot be assumed that simple non-elite status or lack of wealth is the primary selection criteria for inclusion into the lethal behavior. If anything, the Mound 72 example demonstrates that killing was not simply based on elite versus non-elite status, but that gender, age, and reproductive closeness to other members of Cahokian society informed the treatment of these individuals; producing discernible differences in mode of death and burial. In other words, differential burial does not equate to differential status. There is no way to know what the status of these captives had been prior to their captivity. As discussed in chapter six, it is through this captivity that they gained their shared positions and communally imposed identities.

#### *Intentional Deaths/Killings*

The killing of humans in reverence to, or due to a personal desire by a leader to demonstrate their extraordinary power over the killed individual(s) is a behavior that is still not well understood archaeologically. The largest problem paining archaeologists is the actual visibility of these practices in the archaeological record. What is usually the case is that we either have some sort of historical record of an event, but the location of the killed individuals is not known, or we will find (mostly unexpected or otherwise by chance) the remains of individuals or groups of individuals who were killed, but their burials are orderly, and there are no pathological indications of defensive wounds nor other indications that their deaths were caused by a battle or resultant from a interpersonal contact prior to the death event. As with natural disasters, sometimes interpersonal conflict actions occur simultaneously with the larger event. This makes the

record more complicated, but in some cases the complexities will be sorted out. The question then becomes, how much of a history should researchers, humanitarians, and chroniclers gather for and from which individuals?

Not only would they have agency in their own affairs but also in the affairs of others. For instance, although the practice of human sacrifice is recognized in accounts from the Southeast throughout the initial Contact Period with Europe, the details are still largely unknown. The descriptions of retainer sacrifices by the Natchez, and the question of their willingness to participate are still debated among archaeologists. We know, for example, that Le Page du Pratz's account describes the participants in these lethal rituals as willing to die upon the death of a Sun, and that their cooperation brought prestige and honor to their surviving family members. Refusal was seen as bring dishonor to the unwillingly individuals, as well as to their kin (Swanton 1911). Social shaming practices encouraged individuals to follow through despite their reluctance in performing their commitment in these ceremonial arrangements. Additionally, since these individuals were often chosen years in advance, they were treated well throughout that time, with increased access to elite foods and treatment. Despite the overall willingness of the participants, what is equally important to note is that these individuals were also recorded as having been drugged with tobacco, or with additional ingredients that were added to black drink made from *Ilex vomitoria*, commonly known as Yaupon Holly (Hudson 1979) to induce a state a stupor (Hudson 1979; Swanton 1911).

Situations that merit human sacrifice among the Natchez included the death of leaders and for the occurrences where the Great Spirit needed to be appeased after the accepted social behaviors had been violated. These were not daily events, but their

performance was recognized as crucial within populations to ameliorate widespread suffering. Additionally, the individuals involved in the performance of these events often knew that they would eventually be called on to participate. This does not necessarily mean that all were ready and willing to participate when the event occurred, but simply to demonstrate that the selective process was known among the Natchez, and perhaps influenced the treatment that retainers received in life. For instance, they may have obtained access to foodstuffs and use of material items that were typically reserved for elite members of society. Without the written historic accounts of the Natchez (and Taensas) sacrifices, these events could have been severely obscured by time and by the archaeological interpretations, as has occurred in the Cahokian case, where the killed portion of the Mound 72 burials have been subsumed in reconstructions as a monolithic group and worse, as equivalent to non-elite members of Cahokia's population.

A feature that still fascinates researchers about the Natchez retainer sacrifices is that by willingly participating in these lethal rituals, individuals could potentially increase the honor and prestige of themselves as well as their surviving kin. This willingness ties into the concept of cultural coherency, and is not as difficult to understand when one knows the oral traditions involving the “path of souls” (Hall 1995; Lankford 2007b). In the Red-Horn and Twin Cycles, and encoded in other displays of Southeastern cosmological beliefs, it is evident that some populations did not perceive life and death as necessarily finite. Instead, both life and death involved processes of negotiation that were, in special circumstances, allowed to change and people could be restored. The negotiations between individuals and deities for life and death are represented in several areas of oral traditions, including in the imagery of the twins in the Twin Cycle, as well as

in the two potential paths that the soul can journey on at death (Hall 1995; Lankford 2007b), and it is also a prevalent theme in popular stories of spousal death legends that are ripe with attempts to recover these people. These themes are widespread (Erdoz and Ortiz 1984:438-439, 447-451). Unlike the exceptional case of population recovery by the special hero-twins who can resurrect not only each other, but the elders and the rest of the killed population, most of the Orpheus-style accounts include explanations as to why an individual was unsuccessful in recovering a loved one from the land of the dead.



Figure 7.1 Engraved shell gorget. Being holding mace and severed head. Catalian Springs site in Sumner County Tennessee. Courtesy, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (Image No. D150853). Photo by NMAI Photo Services Staff. Modified by author.

In the Winnebago Twin Cycle (a likely similar myth to that being represented in the Cahokian symbol system), not only do the twins die, they also revive each other,

restoring life to each other once it was lost as a consequence of their actions.

Additionally, in the Red-Horn Cycle, Red-Horn's two sons (or nephews) go to the Underworld to retrieve their father's (or uncle's) bone, as well as the bones of the other elders who lost their lives in contest (Figure 7.1).

The goal of the boys' journey is to revive the elders—demonstrating the negotiation between death and renewal (Byers 2006), and the natural cycle of the young claiming the positions of their predecessors. Of importance to the worldview, death was not something that was always permanent, although people could not live forever. It was a fluid notion. Clearly encoded in the Red-Horn myth is the renewal of the population through the passing of sacred knowledge and roles. Leadership roles were not always continued for the elderly, and there was a clear expectation that they will train successors to step down from leadership positions, and not necessarily wait for their physical death.

The selection process in the Natchez cases of retainer sacrifice, and spousal suicide by immolation (*suttee*) were known prior to the death of leaders/spouses. In these cases, not only did participants know their roles, but many accepted (though this does not mean that they were elated about nor willing) in these roles, as they would increase the prestige of their surviving relatives and/or would improve their own station for the duration of their life (Pearson 1993; Swanton 1911). We can speculate that the participants were drugged into participating, but ultimately that level of speculation is unnecessary. What we should look at instead is the availability of this honor/prestige building activity to outsiders. Perhaps it would be available to outsiders or captives, and could represent a social opening that would enable kin to gain inclusion to the population, but then we should expect to see those kin involved and incorporated into that society

through relocation, or intimate trade and social networking. Without this relationship there is little reason to interpret this as usual, nor as a direct mechanism to gain insider status. Alternatively, outsiders, including captives, may be denied participation in retainer practices, as they were so intricately linked to social prestige and social honor systems. Furthermore, these participants were demonstrating their loyalty through payment of the ultimate homage to the deceased. In either scenario, we would need to know more details about the treatment of captives within the particular society; including their physical treatment, and their potential placement/inclusion into the captors' society. As discussed in chapter six, inclusion was a possibility in many societies, especially if the captives were of adolescent age.

Although the Natchez accounts should not be interpreted as identical to the situation at Cahokia, they may represent a close analogy, and are appropriately included in past studies of the Mound 72 mortuary data. The Natchez examples have been used to explore the context of use of these behaviors although the accounts of the Natchez human sacrifice patterns demonstrate that these behaviors were likely different from what happened at Cahokia. Overall, the Natchez example does little to enhance the understanding of captive life at Cahokia because it is not dealing with a homogeneous population that would have gained access to prestige or honor strategies from joining the retainers. If anything, the Natchez example is only applicable to the individuals directly interred alongside the shell-bird burials. This example also supports the position that the majority of killed individuals (females and those in Feature 229 lower) were not retainers, and as not being such they were not likely participants in a prestige-gaining strategy. The killing of these individuals at Cahokia does not appear willingly enacted in the case of

Feature 229 lower. First, these individuals were brutally killed. As they were lined up at the previously dug pit-grave, they were bludgeoned with a large mace with a great exertion of force. As each in the succession was approached they saw the accumulation of bodies forming beneath them. Some appearing as though they were in great pain as their fingers curled, and dug into the sand lining of the grave (Figure 7.2). Secondly, it additionally involves females who were not from the same population. This does not seem a viable status-granting mechanism if outsiders could participate.

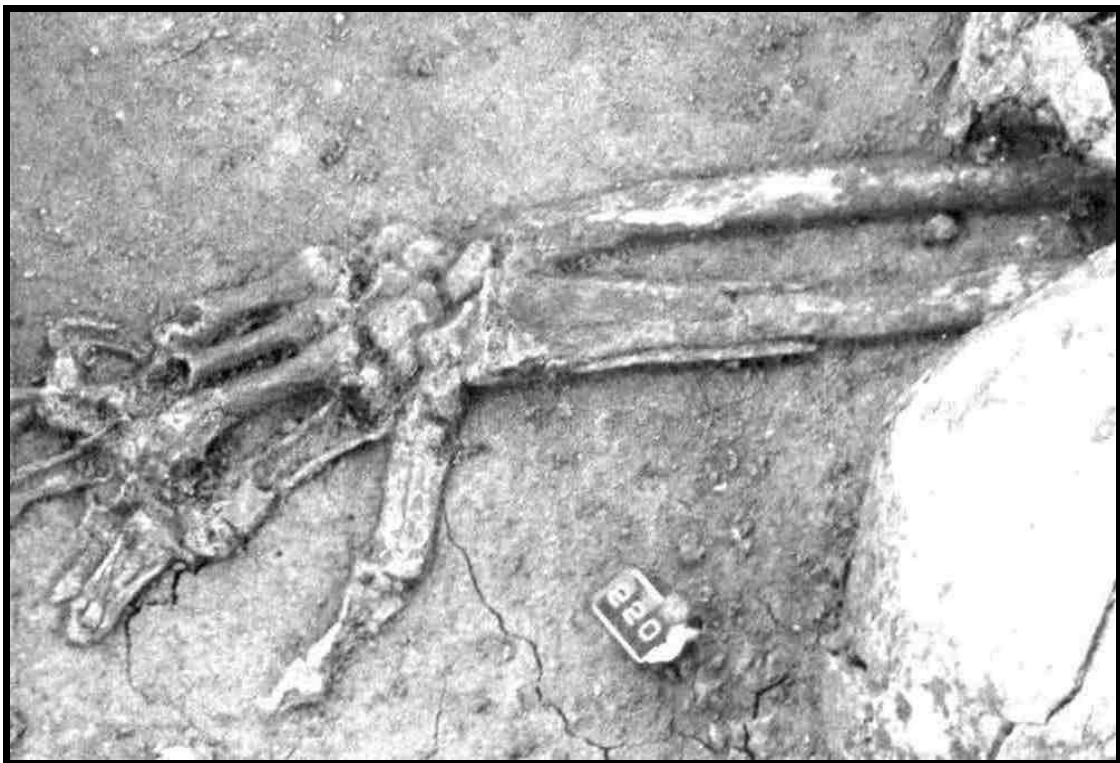


Figure 7.2 Burial 220 from Feature 229 Lower. Note fingers digging into the soil. Image taken by Jerome Rose. Modified by author. Used with permission by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

The amount of variation in mortuary treatments within Mound 72 is high, and the selective process for being killed prior to inclusion did not simply involve gender or status as the selective criteria. Importantly, not all mass graves (those with more than two



individuals) were constructed for killed individuals. In fact, it is because these burials are differential that status relationships have been interpreted as highly ranked at Cahokia. Again, we are confronted with a dilemma involving the interpretation of material mortuary remains. It is difficult to imagine mortuary contexts as representing something other than status—even when these contexts are nothing like our own cemetery usage. We still cannot phantom how these contexts might represent entirely different relationships that have little to nothing to do with socio-economic status or socio-political rank.

Additionally, the mode of death used in killing of victims, as well as their final arrangements were not uniformly performed in a regional context. These differences could indicate socially recognized groups within the Cahokian community at large, or it could indicate their degree of social inclusion into day-to-day interactions at Cahokia. An interesting feature of this difference though, is the differential treatment of the individuals included in the four female mass graves, who did not suffer ongoing abuse despite their outsider and captive-like status. Even at their death they do not have the pathological indications that would suggest that they were violently assaulted. Clearly, they died, and all evidence points to them having been killed; however, time was afforded to their burial arrangement despite their social position as outsiders to the Cahokia population. The death and burial of the killed females are markedly different from the individuals in Feature 229 lower who were violently killed, yet were more closely related to others interred in Mound 72, notably the litter burials. This was inferred from the dental morphological data (Cohen 1974; Rose 1999:81-82). What makes this case so interesting is that if we were to assume that violence is graded based on population closeness, this

example demonstrates that the individuals who were most closely related were actually more violently killed. In other words, we should not assume that producing “otherness” via violence is entirely related to an individuals’ biological closeness.

### **Captives as Human Capital: Symbolic Displays of Power**

The multiple groups of non-local females interred in mass graves in Mound 72, have been interpreted as symbolic displays of power and prestige for the legitimization of elite positions (Porubcan 2000). Being seen by archaeologists as sacrificial victims, they had often been glossed over in interpretations, and are categorized as simply “ritually killed” for elite kin groups. Although their deaths as “ritually” constructed (Steadman 2008) is not incorrect on one level, this label does remove the need for researchers to deeply explore the imposed role or identity of these killed individuals as captives. Further reducing the mortuary interpretation, is the grouping of individuals into status-driven categories. Grouping individuals into status-driven categories further reduces the mortuary interpretation. For example, in the case of the majority of killed individuals in Mound 72, the use of relative categories of status (high, middle, and low, or even elite versus non-elite) does not fit. In other words, they could be war captives who were ritually killed, and their status should not be assumed without even knowing the population from where they were taken. We cannot assume that they were of non-elite or otherwise low-status without knowing how they participated in their own society, nor should we assume that they would blend in with other non-elites at Cahokia. It is pretty evident that they had not blended, did not fit, as they have their own separate burial pits that do not appear to include young females who were related to the individuals interred

in the litter burials.

If we simply assume that the killed females were low status, without really problematizing just what is meant by this term, then potential distinctions between these females and other individuals killed at Cahokia may remain blurred. This is what has happened in the literature on the Mound 72 burials. The focus is, more often than not, fixated on the shell-bird burials (occasionally on the fairly unique litter burials); the rest are lumped together as ritually killed or as sacrificial victims, and as such are themselves primarily markers of the status of the shell-bird burials. In any case, the killed females in Mound 72 were from a different population than others included in this burial context, and were interred separately and distinctly. Without knowledge of where they were brought to Cahokia from, and under what circumstances, we cannot reasonably argue their status—only that they were not incorporated into the living Cahokian population. The population distinction between the killed female groups and others interred in Mound 72 should be a screaming beacon that simplistic status categories employed in various incarnations may not be useful for interpretation. Additionally, the differences in the timing of the interments that are well-known, and modeled based on Fowler et al. (1999) are reproduced in writings on Mound 72, notably Goldstein's (2000:197) flowchart and in the same volume, Robert Watson's (2000:234-237) comprehensible stages of mound development. Our interpretations need to incorporate these multiple production events instead of excluding a large number of burials based solely on the current theory being purported.

What we should instead try to answer are the questions of: Why were these groups selectively killed? Why are there no males, nor children represented in four of the

excavated mass burial units? Are the differences in the timing in which they were interred significant? Why were they viewed differently than the individuals in Feature 229 lower, and as such offered different treatments in death and burial? Of course we will never be able to answer all questions that will arise about these females, but we should aim at the further identification of these females, as well as the other individuals within Mound 72. Following identification, answers to these questions, as well as questions investigating which specific cultural categories are on display, and the messages they can convey, can then be approached.

### *Representation of an Imposed Identity*

The Mound 72 population(s) of killed individuals have identities imposed upon them that are available for reconstruction. Their mortuary inclusion into Mound 72 is different and separate from other interments. Notably, the collective position or status as captives, and any other use of their bodies in life or in the mortuary performance by Cahokians to portray real world and outerworld relationships, demonstrates that the Cahokians were arranging the captive individuals in Mound 72 to fit into their own perspective of the world. As such, any status or position that can be gleaned from this burial context is through the Cahokian filter, and is therefore imposed. Clearly any agency that the captives held, is now lost, and any resistance met and quelled. This does not mean that these individuals did not have agency in life, only that it is hidden under those relationships imposed by their captors in their deaths and burial. Here it is important to remember that archaeological reconstructions of identity, status, and position are limited. We can only gather some data about these relationships and we need to infer

others.

By further comparing the mortuary contexts, the patterns in arrangement become visible. The first similarity between several of the graves of the killed individuals is that they were interred in sand-lined pits as communal groups. The Cahokians distinguished their own burials from these, and buried other Cahokians in the mound as extended burials (single and double), in bundles, on litters, or as processed pile burials. Those that did not fit into these categories were not buried in communal or mass graves, nor were they killed—keeping Cahokian and non-Cahokian burials distinctive. Moreover, the modes of death and arrangement of these groups cannot be reduced to a singular pattern, as described in detail in chapters five and six. An interesting characteristic between the various killed groups in Mound 72 is that these groups of individuals are distinguishable from each other in this burial context. Each pit grave contained slightly varied numbers of individuals, and only two were layered nearly identically. Some of the killed burial groups did not include the same age/sex selective processes that were evident in two of the earliest kill-pit burials included in this context (and this pattern is repeated at least twice later). Perhaps these slight differences in burials are related to variances in their meanings that will eventually be revealed, but ultimately it is the interrelatedness, not the distinctions between these burials that cause them to remain so interesting.

Spatially speaking, the captive females were all interred in mass graves that were separate and distinctive from the remainder of burials in the mound. This supports the suggestion that these different burial groups were recognized as distinct from each other, as well as from others in this context; including the others who were also killed and interred in Features 101, 106 and 229 lower. These distinctions could perhaps align with

interpretations that these females were taken from different natal communities or from different clan groups that needed to be represented separately in burial. Had they all been taken from a single population, that population would have been hugely devastated demographically. Perhaps these females were taken from several populations, reducing the devastation that would severely cripple a single population. For instance, if we were to use population estimates from another large Mississippian site like the East St. Louis Quarry Site with a population of approximately 3000 individuals in its heyday in the Lohmann phase (Kruchten and Galloy 2010), the selection of at least 118 reproductive females would dramatically impact birthrates. Given a roughly fifty/fifty female-male ratio, the 118 plus females would represent nearly eight percent of the total female population and 23.6 percent of the females whom were likely reproductive.

We also need to remember that the Mound 72 females were not the only individuals killed and interred in the Cahokia mounds. Other individuals were killed and buried throughout the site, although we do not know how many, nor where all of these individuals were from. Knowledge of their existence is reduced to brief descriptions contained in reports by salvage archaeologists, and in a few case have been remembered and reconstructed (Alt and Pauketat 2007) for inclusion into the scholarly data. If we consider that Mound 72 and Wilson Mound are just two of at least 120 mounds located at Cahokia that include burials of killed individuals, there is little reason to think that these are the only individuals who perished under similar conditions that simply have not been excavated to date. Without knowing more about the range of burials present throughout the Cahokia site, it is impossible to wholly decipher the extent that captives were taken into Cahokia, or that specific immigrant groups into Cahokia were not tolerated. The

secondary concept is mentioned to remind readers that the Cahokia population was an aggregate of individuals who at times traveled large distances to arrive at this American Bottom location (Emerson and Hargrave 2000). The population was heterogeneous. As noted by several regional specialists, there is no evidence that the surrounding site locations shrunk during the construction and social explosion at Cahokia. In fact, these sites actually grew in tandem (Alt 2010; Kruchten and Galloy 2010). Therefore, the captives were not taken from local populations but were derived from more distant areas. Alternatively, these individuals may have arrived at Cahokia of their own accord, but were not accepted as members of the population. More research is required, especially research that may indicate further where these captives came from specifically, and if they were derived from multiple populations.

Historic records indicate that social inclusion and exclusion of captives into the societies of the captors ranged on a case-by-case basis. Although these captives were included into the mortuary context at Cahokia and were used as important symbols in the mythic tableau, they were not afforded inclusion into Cahokian's daily life. This exclusionary relationship included the imposition of communally held positions, including that of the captive that mortuary archaeologists can reconstruct, albeit to a limited extent. Additionally, the length of the female captivity appears short. I came to this conclusion for several reasons. First and most obvious is that all of these females were young adults, with their age at death approximately in their early twenties. They were not incorporated into the daily life at Cahokia as wives nor as workers who would have survived longer than their restricted age allows in this recontextualization. Additionally, the captive females did not have obvious bone fractures, or other

pathological markers that would indicate that they had undergone physically abusive practices that are associated with victims involved in extended periods of captivity, especially if they were from a warring population where there were endemic raiding attacks (Milner et al. 1991). The lack of bodily evidence of physical violence may indicate that they were taken as captive for tribute versus warfare motivations, or simply and without nearly as much speculation that they simply did not survive at Cahokia long enough to undergo longer term physical violence.

## **Summary**

There have been fantastic strides in recent mortuary interpretations, we need to be continually critical of how status, rank, and wealth are interpreted. It is the job of the mortuary theorist to *translate* the archaeological context using all available tools, including the biological data and social theories that are available. The notion of representation additionally requires us to carefully evaluate and distinguish between imposed, skewed, and direct reflections in burial contexts; the latter of these is too often assumed and, as such, it is abused in interpretations of mortuary contexts. The representations included in burials frequently overlap, and are sometimes even contradictory. Although we cannot reconstruct every last relationship or status held in life, we should be able to elucidate some—even competing—social positions, or at least recognize some of the referenced relationships. Continued work in contextualization of these data and the focus on translation, as opposed to a direct interpretive approach, will enable us to press the mortuary interpretations further into complex social relationships.

Moreover, when the contexts reveal social behaviors that include obvious displays



of violence and killing, it is important that these are evaluated to the furthest extent possible, and that these actions are not glossed over. Without in-depth discussions of these actions, there is no chance that the contextualization can be considered complete. The Cahokia case study demonstrated just how tangled the performances of these varied behaviors can be. By dismissing entire categories of this context as simply derived from “ritual” circumstance, or by attempting to match the symbols directly to the cultural data, we continue to miss the point—that we are making interpretations of overlapping behaviors, including violent, genocidal events, not just defining economic relationships.

## **--CHAPTER EIGHT--**

### **APPLYING THE TERM GENOCIDE: USE AND MISUSE IN PAST AND PRESENT CONTEXTS**

Archaeological research from the past two decades has demonstrated that past populations were not living in perpetually peaceful arrangements throughout time. As with modern times, populations oscillated between overlapping warring and peaceful events. There are continued disputes over what archaeological data can reveal about the visibility and classification of specific regionally-tied events in warring and peaceful behaviors. In particular, the inability to directly reconstruct intent and the difficulties in the evaluation and assessment of the systematic quality of connected actions has reduced researchers' abilities to interpret and classify these events. These difficulties are especially apparent when dealing with mass killing events in both modern and ancient contexts. Although there are no permanent lines drawn between forms of violence; ill-defined categories complicate issues to the point that while direct descriptive definitions are employed to describe events, those who are classifying these are at times unaware that their descriptions fit into classifications reserved for other forms of violence. This is a particularly evident occurrence for the term associated with mass killing events, especially those with visible genocidal tendencies.

In this chapter, I discuss key issues in recent discussions on genocidal behaviors in both modern and ancient contexts. The goal here is twofold. First, I want to present anthropological concepts of the dynamic and ongoing processes that compose the constructions of population identity, and use this as a new way to explore how

populations are identified as victims of genocidal events. This approach allows us to better recognize the fluid boundaries that are constructed between and within populations. Though the boundaries are fluid, they have constructive distinctions being made which are thereby recognized by participating communities. It additionally allows researchers to move away from faulty concepts of strictly biological populations; while populations can include biological and genetic distinctions, they are too often misread and unclear in practice. Second, I will bring in the discussion of Cahokia's Mound 72 that I have used as a case study in this project, and evaluate this context to test the viability of these modern concepts in an ancient setting. Here we will see the convergence of secular and religious beliefs which allows us to explore the complexity of these violent interactions.

However, before I can achieve my goals for this chapter, I need to present the definitions and understandings that I have encountered in dealing with the term and phenomena that is genocide. Ultimately, this discussion links the recent interpretations of genocide to those occurring prior to international legislation; particularly focusing on prehistoric cases to develop a model for the evaluation of archaeological examples. Specifically, I am concerned with questions surrounding the role(s) of killed individuals included in Cahokia's Mound 72. The groups of killed individuals are differentially buried from members of the Cahokian population who were also buried in this mound. Also, the killed individuals should not be interpreted as a cohesive group as there were distinctions within this population as discussed in preceding chapters; only some can be included into the category of genocidal violence. Explorations into these differences being expressed in these burials point to issues of representation, and necessitate explanations that incorporate these variations.

## Defining and Recognizing Genocidal Behavior

Before I can fully discuss the archaeological classification of mass killing events, I need to discuss the most contested classification category of mass killing, genocide in the modern setting. Within modern contexts, linking violence to genocidal actions is no easy task, and for good reason as we do not want to reduce the meaning of this category by allowing it to be used and applied in situations that may not best represent this behavior. However, the inclusion of events into this category is highly restricted, based on archaic definitions of populations, and fail to reveal how these populations are identified for targeting. Popular views reduce this term to essentially “racist killings,” or killing of one biological population by another. This excludes mass killings that target protected populations, such as religious groups that do not necessarily represent distinctive biological groups. That is, the popular view takes the concept of “killing of a tribe” to mean that these tribal constructions are biologically informed, and that these are clear and discernible populations. Sadly this strict understanding and misinterpretation of population constructions limits the use of this term so much that it is difficult to apply in many situations, including when a population kills non-wanted members who are biologically related, but socially distinctive. Sectors within populations are frequently identifiable, and could be targeted for extreme violence that is focused on eradication. There is little reason to exclude these from genocidal behaviors. Furthermore, although intent for population eradication and destruction is often reconstructed based on inferences—as much of the evidence is not material when identifying motivations—this intent should be impossible or nearly impossible to reconstruct in cases of non-genocidal actions. The term *ethnic cleansing* is politically used to guise genocidal tendencies by

avoiding the use of the stigma-laden terms of genocidal and genocide.

In the modernist and postmodernist perspectives it is sometimes difficult to imagine and reconcile the thoughts that would allow us to recognize genocidal behaviors that were not industrialized to the point that they resemble assembly lines in factories. Part of our skewed perspective resulted from the industrialized killings of millions by German Nazis in World War II, and the exile of millions of Armenians in 1915. The haunting images from these events remain fresh in the memories of victims and in the teachings passed on to following generations; it is the frame in which other occurrences of eradication behaviors are now measured and compared, and many only distantly resemble these events despite their constructions from similar motivations. Using the highly industrialized World War II events creates incoherence, or loss of cultural translation, and in doing so limits our understandings of violence more than it enlightens or allows us to reconcile these events. I argue that the scale and performative quality has changed, but the behavior and intent are the same.

Genocide and genocidal tendencies are not always easily recognizable phenomena. Even events that are perceived by some as absolutely clear attempts to eradicate populations are adamantly denied by others, including those who were not the perpetrators and in fact sympathize with the victims (Destexhe 1995). Part of this problem relates to an international reluctance to portray events as genocide, while the other part is based on misinterpretation of what behaviors can and perhaps should be included as acts of genocide. For instance, no scholar wants to attach this term to events without being absolutely convinced themselves that genocide has occurred. This reluctance is sometimes related to avoiding the resulting social stigma that remains with

populations who perpetrate these acts, but also we do not want to reduce the meanings associated with this term by applying it too broadly. This still does not explain why it is so difficult to identify this behavior. Taken in simple terms, genocide is the attempt of a population to remove another population (in part or as a whole) from existence.

Eradication can be accomplished through many means, but the most easily recognizable form is through patterns of systematic killing. However, this does not need to replicate the mechanized actions of the Nazis in order to be considered systematic. I will pick this point up later in this chapter, but would like readers to recognize that many of our views of what genocidal activities include have been shaped by our understandings of events from World War II and the Armenian experiences.

Some of the strictest uses of the term genocide only recognize three events in all of human history as genocide (Destexhe 1995): the Armenian exile in 1915; the Nazi Holocaust, and the systematic killing of Tutsis by Hutus in 1994. That is, these definitions include the events that first spurred Rafal Lemkin to define population eradication behaviors, and sometimes will incorporate the seemingly undeniably genocidal events experienced in 1994 in Rwanda, although this was not officially called a genocide until much later. The only certainty that can be said for acts of violence is that they are difficult to classify, and rarely is there cohesive agreement of the form of violence being witnessed or reconstructed. This is especially true when dealing with activities that appear to extend beyond internationally accepted warfare behaviors, but can include those warfare activities as well.

Instead of taking Justice Stewart's (1964) "I know it when I see it" approach to the topic of violence and in describing actions as genocidal, I hope to engage the

discussion further by illuminating some issues that impede the detection, prevention, and punishment of genocide by using current anthropological understandings. This includes using theories borrowed from cultural anthropology to understand the constructive processes behind population identity, and our tendency to essentialize these identities rather than accept these as constructed through a continual process of negotiation that does not necessarily end upon death of the individual. These updated understandings of populations should assist current legal entanglements and confusion in cases where the four protected population types (religious, ethnic, racial, and national) are not the target for genocidal violence, but other identifiable communities are identifiable and are targeted.

To reiterate from earlier chapters, burials of interest in this discussion from Mound 72 include those found in Feature 229 lower as well as the four excavated female mass graves. The Feature 229 lower burial pit contains thirty-nine individuals who were violently killed, and were not buried (nor killed) in the same manner as other individuals killed and included in the mound. Furthermore, Features 105, 205, 214, and 237 represent several killing events that involved the presumed poisoning and strangulation of young women who were selectively chosen for these events (Rose 1999), and at least two of which preceded the shell-bird burials. The mass killing of foreign females in their reproductive years has been dismissed by some who describe these killings as “ritual” in nature, and by others who solely focus on linking these killing events to the larger cosmology at the expense of the obvious selection of reproductive females. That is, these theories see these females as rather simply representing sacrificial offerings for political, religious, or even mythical beings, thus understanding their positions in the secular realm

are ignored, or are portrayed as insignificant. I disagree. There is little reason to exclude killings that are ritualistically performed from being potentially interpreted as genocidal; these are not mutually exclusive phenomena. Actually, the foreigner status of these females probably enabled their inclusion into the mythic burial performance.

Before we can continue the evaluation of the differentially killed individuals buried in Mound 72 as potential victims of genocidal acts, the term genocide and the difficulties when identifying acts of genocide require further discussion. Debates among archaeologists, as well as among recent political figures, expose the underlying inconsistencies in conceptions and uses of this term. For instance, some scholars only recognize (Bauman 1989) genocide as a state-level activity, and thus exclude certain events because there were no clear state-level prescribed instructions to execute and enact genocidal measures. This limited view excludes non-state societies, even in cases where this behavior is apparent, but further, it is often used to attempt to reify the contested ideas of social evolution. The concept of *systematic* is too often misinterpreted to only recognize documented evidence which can exclude many events that demonstrate genocidal tendencies from current discussions. Non-literate, non-state, and prehistoric populations were as capable of systematically killing non-members as any other. The term *systematic* can and should refer to any methodological plan, and the actions that are socially sanctioned in the worldview and/or ideologies of populations, not to the paper remnants of these plans that rarely exist. The discussion of these concepts, as well as issues in the full range of the components of genocidal behavior is discussed at length below.



## **Problematizing the Classifications of Genocidal Actions and the Assessment of Collective Identity**

There are large differences between scholars in the application of the term genocide. The term was coined by Rafal Lemkin in 1944 as a response to the Holocaust of Jews and other minority communities by the Nazis, and was further influenced by the widely witnessed Armenian exiles in 1915. Lemkin's goal was to define the large scale mass killing events and attempts to eradicate populations under Hitler's regime in order to facilitate the identification and prosecution of similar acts. It literally means the "killing of a tribe," and is meant to refer to behaviors that are aimed at the destruction of populations in whole or in part (Jones 2006:10).

Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be the disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. (Lemkin 1944)

As defined by Lemkin, genocide specifically refers to the systematic and intentional destruction of what were thought of as stably defined (biological) populations; explicitly noting that the methods of population destruction can vary, and do not necessarily involve the killing of members of that population (Jones 2006:13; Totten et al. 1997). For instance, although mass killing of members of a population may be the most easily identifiable of these processes, intentional birth prevention, mental harm, widespread torture, rape, or mutilation targeted at populations, and the transferring of children are also included in the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide (CPPG) and the 1949 Geneva Conventions. These are maintained by the June

30, 2000 Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court (PrepComm).

Therefore, genocide involves a dismantling of the socially constructed *other*. Although Lemkin and others thought that by defining populations as groups strictly informed by their biology would aid in demonstrating genocidal behaviors for legal purposes, this misconception of how populations are constructed has instead sadly reduced these actions and has caused them to be repetitively missed or impossible to demonstrate.

Too often, events classified as genocide only include those where mass killings have occurred, and proving the intent to eradicate a population further reduces the ease of classifying some events as genocide. In fact, as I am writing this the genocide crisis in Darfur is currently holding a contested status as some argue that the intent to destroy any population is not clear and therefore cannot be classified as genocide, despite the widespread use of systematic raping, brutalization, mass killing, and the exile of at least a million residents of the Darfur region of the Sudan. Heating the debate is the participation of President Omar al-Beshir in acts violating International Human Rights and acts of genocide, which the International Criminal Court (ICC) is currently reviewing and is expected to present their decision shortly. Although many Westerners view the events in Darfur as genocide, attempts to prevent and limit these events were delayed at the expense of uprooting millions of people and the death of at least 300,000 individuals including children, adults, and the elderly ('Issa 2007; Lavallee 2009). Prevention and intervention efforts are too often impeded due to difficulties in classifying behavior as specifically genocide, causing relief efforts that are too late for many. This sluggishness was not Lemkin's goal in asking the international community to infer intention, nor was it his goal in stating that these behaviors are systematically employed. What he was getting

at was that the mindset of populations sometimes allows and even encourages the multitude of actions that together comprise genocidal behaviors. These actions are sanctioned and are even at times further propagated by agencies in power, but that government sanctioning of this behavior is not a requirement—social sanctioning or allowance of targeted violence is required. Of course nobody wants to see this term applied haphazardly, but if it prevents nations and humanitarians from readily intervening in these devastating events, then it is time that we critically evaluate the use of these classificatory terms.

Populations protected by the international laws for genocide include: religious, national, ethnic and racial groups. It is interesting that these laws specify so few populations that are protected as this excludes other categories of shared identity that compose populations, including some communities within populations that have been previously targeted for acts of violence and destruction. We must remember the context in which Lemkin defined genocide, and in which these laws were subsequently formed. The term genocide was defined during a period of history where the concept of races was considered a valid and natural/biological category for describing and categorizing populations, and the truly social processes of population identity, ethnogenesis, and racial constructions were not strongly theorized. Since this time, more recent population studies have demonstrated that the collective construction of population identity is a dynamic, ongoing process and that our earlier concepts of strict, biologically distinct populations was faulty. For instance, Paul Gilroy's (1990) definition of *ethnic absolutism* enables us to move away from interpreting ethnic and national categories as bounded phenomena that were primarily constructed on older concepts of biologically differentiated

populations. This is not to say that there are no biological distinctions between populations, clearly there are differences. Instead this is a call to recognize that purely focusing on biological distinctions limits and outright ignores the social constructions of populations. Biological lines between groups are often over simplified, ill-defined, misinterpreted, and ultimately hinder our understandings of how people create, recognize, and reconstruct their collective identities that are identifiable, and therefore can be targeted for physical destruction.

Additionally, the categories of collective populations can and do change over time; these are not fixed categories. For instance, nations rise and fall; national identities are not permanently attached to people although they can exceed a person's lifetime. I strongly doubt that Lemkin and supporters of more successful applications of this international legislation would exclude other targeted populations or communities given improved understandings of these concepts. Also, the defined populations in descriptions of target populations (i.e., national, ethnic, racial, and religious groups) should be used as examples of targeted populations, but not as the only ones that are afforded protection.

Furthering the ideas of collective population identity, recent studies of formative and fluid identity, racial categorization, and the formation of ethnic identity (ethnogenesis) have continued to move away from viewing these as fixed, bounded phenomena. Instead the focus is on the social aspects of their construction (Barth 1969; Cohen 1978; Vincent 1974). In other words, these are not natural categories and may not be universally coherent categories of group identification. Ethnic groups, for example, do not need biological differences between them in order for populations to be recognizably distinctive. Michael Herzfeld's (1988) study of Glendiot identity illustrates this point well

based on the concept of *performativity*—the idea that there are different degrees of culturally acceptable performances that shift throughout a population's history. For instance, there males are not simply men because of their biology, but one must perform and maintain their masculinity in order to be identified by the community not just as male, but as a Glendi male. In addition to the performativity of identity, the Glendiot example illustrated how as a population, the Glendiot could identify themselves as being Greek, Cretion, and Glendi. These variations resulted from situational needs of the interaction, including differences in whoever else was involved in the interaction. The point in Herzfeld outlining the variability in Glendiot perceptions of population identity is that the Glendiot perceived themselves as entirely distinct from other Greeks and Cretions. This demonstrates that the Glendiot could actively recognize and participate in varying levels of group identity that were enacted by other populations. Alan Galloway (2002) recognized these fluctuations in group identities in indigenous populations living in the Southeastern US throughout Colonial interactions.

Population identities are created both within populations, and by interactions with outsiders (Barth 1969). It is important to remember that these are shared identities that are performed and maintained by members of that population. The active maintaining and reconstructing of social identities allows for transitions and changes to develop and gain selective inclusion (or alternatively non-inclusion) into the population. These identities are produced as fragmented and situational (Butler 1990; Kondo 1990). Edward Schieffelin (1985) articulates this process further as constructive of both shared group identity and as a cultural reality. Through the performance of identity, individuals and populations create their realities, and these identities can shift or all together change if

needed or desired. This is what Alan Galloway (2002:113) recognized and discussed in his understandings of ethnic affiliation in colonial period indigenous populations in the Southeastern United States. Galloway notes that ideas of ethnicity were not important in the daily life of these populations, as clan membership superseded this identity. Ethnicity, on the other hand, became important in relationships with the English colonists, and has maintained their importance because of how indigenous populations are recognized by federal agencies.

Given the topic of genocidal violence, or the targeting of populations aimed at their destruction, we must fully recognize that our identities are a socially formed phenomena that are part of an ongoing constructive process, not just a singular product. We cannot rely on theories or descriptions that view populations as natural, fixed, or strictly bounded. Instead, our discussion needs to shift toward the *creative processes of population identity*, identification, and the attempts to eradicate specific populations or communities. This enables us to include and protect targeted populations more easily, and increases our understanding of identity processes, tolerance and intolerance. The processes are ongoing, and as such they need to be understood as dynamic negotiations. This is why I have chosen to adopt more of a performance framework. While practice theories do accept wider ranges in archaeological data sets that could be attributed to variations in ritual performances, they lack the important idea of population identity because of the fears that these identities will be essentialized by archaeologists. This is a valid reservation, but we cannot simply ignore identity even if our lacking cultural coherence prevents us from knowing individualized interpretations of identity. Actually, the individual level identity may arguably be irrelevant to this discussion, because

archaeologists dealing with potential questions of genocide, looking for the symbols of identity that have been imposed onto the victims—not how the archaeologists interpret the victim's identity. This would be an interesting outcome without a doubt, but unless one has access to the living individual, it is not just unknowable on a cursory level alone, but also is only a snapshot of the creative process of identity that can be recreated through social performances of ritual.

While recognizing the fluidity of identity and calling for a more modern view of populations that can be targeted for genocide, we must also be cautious not to apply the terms genocide or genocidal lightly, particularly when dealing with prehistoric cases in which even more limited data is available. Boundaries need to exist, although they may be complex and overlapping. It is just as detrimental to use terms and concepts that are so limited based on the best case scenarios for legal burdens of proof that they are no longer useful. For my purposes, I see the identification and naturalization of outside groups as *othered* as key in these constructions. To reiterate an earlier point, the Nazis did not simply kill Jews, but they focused on non-Aryans, the *others*. The Nazis also killed the Poles, gypsies, homosexuals, and more. Their point, and my point here, is that the Nazis did not target a single or united population, but rather killed various non-Aryan populations who did not fit into the desired population.

Of further importance for this discussion, there are sometimes very brutal actions enacted on individuals or groups that cannot be classified as genocidal acts. For example, Renato Rosaldo (1989) wrote about the Ilongot headhunting and the rage that followed the death of a loved one. The Ilongot would kill and decapitate others, denying the victim's right to live, in order to diminish their own grief and rage. However, the ultimate

goal of headhunting was not to destroy any particular community or population, and therefore cannot be considered an act of genocide nor a genocidal behavior. I need to be clear here, the differences here are not just the scale of who is being targeted (individual versus group), but also the intent to destroy an identifiable population. Non-genocidal actions may include actions that may currently violate individual Human Rights; the lack of intent to destroy a population excludes these acts from classification as genocidal. These occurrences are not less important, but may demonstrate other overlapping violent behavior.

### **Components of Genocide**

There are both physical and mental components of genocide. The mental component refers to the intent to eradicate or severely harm members of a population. This should not be reduced to a motive, as motive refers to the specific reason(s) for the intent to destroy, such as gaining control to the access of lands, resources, material goods, political power, or an extreme intolerance toward a population that the perpetrator(s) seek to eliminate members of that population. The motive(s) behind these events illuminate the mindset of the perpetrators, but they are not necessarily knowable. As Adam Jones (2006:21-22) suggests that *intent* and *motive* are quite distinguishable; with intent being the demonstration that an action or series of actions were intentional as opposed to an accidental occurrence. Accordingly, the legal distinction between intent and motive is based on proving that the violent behaviors are purposeful actions. Moreover, the motives for genocide are often complex and it is difficult to identify a singular motivation.

The complexity of motives is revealed in modern cases of genocide through



extensive communication with individuals involved. For instance, in Liisa Malkki's (1995) research with Hutu refugees, she found that her informants frequently relay accounts of abuse, torment, exile, and genocide that were enacted on individuals and their communities by the Tutsi members of society. Here, portions of the Hutu population were identified as important members of the society, particularly educators and other professionals and killed, resulting in the majority of Hutus fleeing Burundi (Lemarchand 1997:323). The pain and tragedy of these events are clear in the stories and *mythico-history* of the victims of violence, and are used to explain part of the motivations for the subsequent Hutu rebellion and genocide of Tutsi in 1994. Victims who had lost family and community members and feared for their own lives and fled Burundi in 1972 in mass exiles, only to be continuously targeted for violence when some had attempted to return to their homes years later. Within the refugee camps, individuals united in counter-political groups, some of which then turned to the goal of eliminating the Tutsi individuals who had long oppressed and enacted violence against the Hutu communities. Here the victims become the perpetrators and the cycle of violence (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004) continued. This furthermore creates a difficult situation for international lawmakers as well as for members of the global society to comprehend because the lines between victims and perpetrators, and even Hutu and Tutsi as distinct ethnic categories (Malkki 1995) are blurred.

The physical component of genocide refers to the actual methods used to destroy populations. These include birth prevention, mental harm, widespread torture, rape, or mutilation targeted at specific populations, and the transferring of children. Although in some of the cases of genocide that are commonly accepted mass killings that crossed

gender and age categories, this is not a requirement for classifying an event as genocide. In the case of the Tutsi genocide of Hutu in Burundi, scholars, educators and other Hutu in important positions were targeted and killed prior to the larger outbreak of violence and exile of millions of Hutu. The goal of this behavior, called “le plan Simbananiye” (Lemarchand 1997:323), was to reduce the Hutu population’s ability to resist the Tutsi socio-political and economic control. Additionally, it removed individuals that could teach Hutu history from their own perspective—an attempt to eradicate the Hutu ethnic identity. The targeting of these sectors within the Hutu population were acts of genocide, even though the violence had not yet reached the larger Hutu population. Looking back on the genocides we can evaluate the Simbananiye Plan and its results as acts of genocide, even though they were not visible actions at the time, and therefore, they were not detected and the actions were not prevented. In the Simbananiye Plan the intent to destroy the Hutu identity and persons was clearly articulated, but there were a series of actions that composed the genocide, not the plan alone. Responsibility stemmed beyond a single individual or even a small group, as many people enacted violent acts upon Hutu individuals.

Recognized genocides are composed of a series of multiple events united by the intent to destroy a population. When genocidal events are viewed as isolated occurrences as opposed to larger connected patterns of violence, it becomes more difficult to identify and classify them as part of genocide. Imagine the following scenario. A man kills another man based on the perpetrator's intolerance of the victim’s religious beliefs and without any provocation by the individual, this would be considered manslaughter if there was no premeditation, murder if it were planned, and a hate crime in both cases.

Now let us add a larger social context. Some of the perpetrator's neighbors also mistreat, and in several more cases, harm other members of that religious group. The overall sentiment of the perpetrating population is that the religion and its practitioners should end at all costs. Local authorities arrest the perpetrators who committed the specific crimes, but more crimes and violent acts against this population occur. At what point are we able to classify these as acts of genocide? Currently, we would need to find some evidence that the attacks were systematic and that intent involved the destruction of that specific religious population. In modern examples we can hope to find records of this agenda, but records can be destroyed, and in the prehistoric cases, by definition are non-existent. Given these other levels of complexity, it is not surprising that genocides are difficult to detect, label, prevent, and even more so, to prosecute. This becomes exorbitantly more difficult when key facilitating members of the perpetrating population(s) are difficult to identify. For example, it may be easier to find the individual(s) who physically enacted a violent crime than those in power who encouraged or forced that action.

Identifying the early stages of genocide is not an easy task, but we should strive to detect these events as soon as they begin to register as acts of genocide. We should take escalation of scapegoating and violent acts aimed at targeted individuals more seriously, particularly when they occur together. For example, in Sierra Leone physical mutilation of assumed members of socio-political factions occurs (Jackson 2004). Here the supporters of the diamond trade physically harm, often by removing the hand that one would vote with or by killing members of their communities. This is done not only to voting adults, but also their children. This cannot and should not be viewed solely as part

of a civil war within Sierra Leone, but falls under classification of genocidal behavior. In this case, individuals are targeted and physically marked as outsiders. Children are forced to punish and in some cases kill family members thought to be members of the opposed political faction. Couching these acts under terms of civil war, or even as solely Human Rights violations is not enough. These classifications can be detrimental because they limit the exposure of the larger pattern of social violence, and may obscure or outright deny the evident intent to destroy the undesired sectors of the population. In other words, describing these events as unfortunate, brutal consequences of “tribal warfare” or “civil war,” allows the international community to dismiss these violent actions, and limits intervention. This is shocking when civilians, including children and the elderly are clearly the targets of violent behavior. These actions cannot simply be dismissed as acts of warfare, they go far beyond hostile nationalistic warring. Here no national boundaries are being defended, but populations are being targeted for removal based on differing political and economically agendas. Using a strict classification of genocide severely limits how the international community can become involved in prevention, protection, and punishment of the perpetrators.

### **Natural Categories? Target Populations and Communities**

Current definitions of genocide fail to recognize that the identities of members of populations extend beyond the four categories that are defined, and these categories are mutable. Systematic acts of violence performed against socio-economic classes, genders and disabled individuals are not protected under genocide laws even in cases where intent to harm or destroy these populations or individuals are clear; instead these acts are

classified differently as solely human rights violations when they are sometimes both human rights violations and acts of genocide. Widespread harm or killing of individuals based on gender, socio-economic class or disability status should, in some cases, be included as an act of genocide, for instance, when they are targeted for partial or whole destruction. Furthering this idea, the treatment of mentally and physically disabled individuals at some Serbian institutions has been undeniably torturous (Agence France-Presse Nov 14, 2007), but has not been reported as genocidal acts despite torture and lack of concern for maintaining these individuals' lives, with the disabled as a clearly targeted population. The lack of classification as both a human rights violation and as an act of genocide is a result of the strict definitions of protected populations and disabled individuals are not a protected category or population. This is sadly not too surprising as Western society is not known for valuing people with disabilities—largely marginalizing and leaving these members of populations voiceless.

The difficulty of applying the term genocide in the case of Serbian disability facilities is a complex issue. Not only does the strict definition of populations that are protected by genocide laws not specifically include disabled individuals, but it is also complicated by the links that people make between genocide and state-institutionalization of that violence, as well as dated concepts of essentialized identities. The link between state-level institutionalized violence and genocide emerged from the graphic images of the Nazi concentration camps, death factories and the militarization of many Germans during this period. It was clear that the genocide of the undesirable communities were organized and executed by the Nazi state under Hitler, and these powerful images characterize what many think of when they think about genocide. Events that similarly

include mass killings, humiliation, and the brutalization of individuals as a result of an articulated population difference are more easily recognized as acts of genocide than acts performed on a sector of a population that crosses major lines of identity like the members who are mentally or physically disabled. There is an apparent reluctance for some researchers to classify these as genocide as they are not specifically aimed at eradicating a “race” or “tribe” of people, and there is also a reluctance to accept that genocide can occur within populations targeting communities. However, when one recognizes that populations, communities and identities are social constructions that can overlap and crosscut through social boundaries, then one can see that the naturalization of protected categories is anything but natural, and that these are dynamic constructions in a perpetual process of ‘becoming’ (Butler 1990). In fact, the concept of “race” is often denied by most anthropologists, at least as a biological category. As with other forms of population identity, “racial categories” are social constructions based on phenotypic phenomena, such as skin color that really do not define nor identify populations. Much has changed in our theoretical conceptions of population identity since Lemkin’s time that require us to reevaluate our definitions of populations in order to classify, and attempt to reduce the occurrences of these mass killing events.

Furthermore, this naturalization of the four populations (national, religious, ethnic, and racial) that the categories include for protection assumes that these are biological or easily identifiable categories. In other words, it infers that all individuals possess and express these categories of identity. It also implies that these are fixed categories, and that they are primary to all other categories of population identity. Stepping back to the example of the facilities for the disabled Serbians, these facilities

housed disabled individuals from all backgrounds within Serbia and therefore were not targeting any of the four protected population categories. Instead, the targeted community was one that crosscut these lines. This calls for us to re-evaluate these laws and ensure that every community within populations that is targeted, is protected by not just Human Rights laws, but also genocide laws when applicable, as was seemingly Lemkin's intention by articulating "in part or whole." What we need to do is expand the definition to include protection for any portion(s) of the population (i.e., communities) that are targeted with the understanding that these portions are not bounded, fixed, nor even universal categories. Although these are not natural categories, they are real and can be identified—though this entails the use of symbolic identification and marking of these populations. Many anthropologists do not accept identities or even populations as bounded natural categories, nor do they view these as fixed or permanent. Rather identities, including national, ethnic, religious, and racial identities are a socially constructed and maintained phenomena. This does not erase their existence, however it points to the problematic nature in trying to legally protect individuals when populations are defined as bounded entities, or cases of targeting a portion of a population does not neatly fall into those categories, such as in the cases of targeting specifically gendered individuals, or people who do not share the same ideology, *et cetera*.

The lack of natural categories poses a great obstacle for physical analysis of the remains of genocide victims. While we are able to reconstruct some population differences through the analysis of human remains, we cannot make the leap to assume separate ethnic, national, religious, or even racial categories without support from the symbolic inclusions that mark these identities. To elaborate, we can sometimes identify

differences in diet, behavior, primary water source, or heredity, but without living members of at least one of the populations involved, or a record of their distinct symbols of identity, we cannot always reconstruct how these populations identified themselves ethnically, religiously, etc. In cases where perpetrators deny individuals the symbolic markers in their burials these data are potentially lost—especially if the event occurred in the prehistoric periods. What we can sometimes see is that an individual or group was killed (in some cases we can specify how) and we reconstruct their final treatment(s). This final treatment can indicate mode of death, a life-history of nutrition, and their burial treatment, but may not indicate why or sometimes even how the population was targeted. This process of identity removal and denial is frequent in recent cases of genocide, but often impossible for ancient events where the population level identities are already muted. Furthermore, in the modern context individuals are sometimes stripped of all their possessions, especially material items that would aid in their identification and are buried in clandestine graves to reduce the chances of their discovery, and make it more difficult to identify and implicate perpetrators. Although this might be a modern reaction to international legal laws, it is important to recognize this as an immense complication in interpreting the physical data, and should be considered in ancient occurrences of these actions. Since most archaeologists recognize the complications and limits on reconstructing individual identities, this would not be a normal goal in current research.

The process of targeting of victim populations should be included into our current discussions. What appears to occur is that individuals are identified as members of the undesired population, they are marked or isolated, and are then harmed based on their inclusion in this undesired category. Even in the case of Nazi Germany, individuals who



were Jewish or members of other undesirable categories (homosexuals, disabled, Gypsies, etc.) were often identified and marked prior to their removal and/or prior to them being actively harmed. This identification and marking also occurred in the more recent cases of Rwanda and Burundi where individuals were required to carry identification cards that clearly marks their inclusion into Tutsi and Hutu categories. The marking and/or isolation of targeted populations demonstrates the dubious nature of outright identification of members of these populations. In fact, when trying to prosecute the perpetrators of genocide in Rwanda, the issue of identity cards has played a key role as evidence that Tutsi had been targeted (Koff 2004). Where the identity cards were removed and presumably destroyed, this made it impossible to identify remains as Tutsi or Hutu without individuals being identified by community members or relatives. Their status of Hutu or Tutsi was sometimes assumed based on burial type, but this cannot be relied on as an accurate measure of population identity. In cases where the international community becomes involved there are potentially victims who do not neatly fall into the categories of perpetrator or targeted population and without symbols we cannot accurately identify these individuals.

Populations can sometimes be targeted and mistreated but not fall under the definition of genocide. Take the following example for instance. A population systematically ignores or harms members of its lowest socio-economic class to the point that these individuals have severely reduced or a complete lack of resources seen as necessary for survival. Individuals who attempt to assist members of this population are fined for even providing an unauthorized food source in a public space that caused other members of the society to be offended by the presence of these undesirables (New York

Times July 28, 2006). Widespread social views of this economic class is that it is one primarily of choice as a result of laziness or vice, and there is a refusal to assist them on a personal level—leaving the responsibility on the shoulders of few to carry. Although homeless individuals are not outright killed, and there are some resources available, these resources are very limited, and shelters are often unsafe. Large portions of our society take the “don’t look and it won’t exist” path and ignore the plight of these individuals, or severely dehumanize these individuals.

One only needs to recall views of members of socio-economic classes under serfdom systems to realize that the perceptions of individuals between socio-economic classes were seen as real categories of quality of those individuals, not just a mark of economic wealth. An economically poor lord was still a lord, and was thus more advantaged than an individual who was rich, but not a lord. This view still remains today, but is sometimes hidden by the structural violence of societies. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Phillipe Bourgois (2004:1) state that the structural violence of “poverty, hunger, social exclusion, and humiliation – inevitably translates into intimate and domestic violence.” This reinforces the idea that lowest economic classes are violent, though the root of this violence is not faulted to them, albeit a possibly unintentional implication from that statement. The point Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004) were making was not to emphasize the individuals in those categories as violent beings, but rather that the social structure of violence produces victims of the violence that perpetrate acts of violence as a response to that cycle. However, I do not think that it is as simple as presented here. Structural violence is enacted on multiple levels and access to better legal resources favor individuals with higher economic means causing a false appearance of

higher rates of intimate or domestic violence among lower economic individuals. In addition, jurors may favor economically advantaged individuals that can afford scientific jury selections that better assess jurors as participants (Coon and Mitterer 2009:695-696; Strier 1999). Violence is not simply a continuum with specific resting points during events. It is enacted on many levels and in different forms, and is overlapping. We should not view it as sliding on a relative scale of severity based on faulty concepts of intensity and scale. I agree with Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois (2004) that violence can often encourage more violence, but I do not envision it as a singular continuum, nor do I interpret these behaviors as necessarily distinctive in their physical signatures, as is currently popular in bioarchaeological accounts of violence (Martin and Frayer 1997). Instead, I see the patterns of violence as distinctive sets that overlap as in a Venn diagram. It can be productive, but it is certainly not linear.

One of the largest problems that I see continuously in viewing the categories of violence as discrete descriptive forms can sometimes be used to justify historic cases where the lines between forms of violence are not simple. For instance, in the recently declassified government documents from Stalinist Russia, no ethnic group was targeted on paper. However, what emerged in readings of these documents was that systematic famine targeted farmers who resisted collectivization (Bilinsky 1999). These farmers were often, but not exclusively, Ukrainian and as a result of their resistance were made to suffer widespread hunger and starvation. The lack of a clearly targeted ethnicity is used as the argument for these tragic actions to not be viewed as genocide (Conquest 1990). Solely because the event extended into the larger economically depressed population should not preclude it as a genocidal action. Here, what should be clear are the multiple

levels of violence that were in play in these events: the structural violence that prevented Ukrainian and other portions of the population from obtaining financial stability, as well as the actualized violence of systematic famine that resulted in the deaths of millions within these agrarian and most frequently Ukrainian communities. The ability to deny events is informed by the strict definitions used to understand populations and the categories of violence. We need to unpack, and unbound these terms if we hope to recognize and understand the context of these events.

### **Visible Indications of Genocide**

As described previously, acts of genocide are composed of both physical and mental components that include the intent to destroy and the actions used to carry out the intent. Here I will describe some of the visible indications of genocide from known events. To begin, I will first describe the mental components, particularly the public sentiment and articulation of a targeted population. It is important to note that some of the following indications are not in themselves illegal, but can still be considered acts of genocide when these correspond to the actions that result in population destruction. Namely, this includes speech acts that encourage or otherwise incite individuals to take action against targeted populations. This link is particularly apparent when these behaviors are quickly followed by additional actions, such as killing events or birth prevention measures, but are less clear at their onset. No one act or event ever comprises genocide. Speech acts, even those that press for or demand action are not the genocide event itself, but can be genocidal in nature. This point needs to be absolutely clear. Even mass deaths of populations do not always indicate this behavior if there is no intent to kill

or otherwise destroy the population. Although this intent needs only to be inferred, it should not be haphazardly applied to all instances of mass deaths/killings. For instance, wars often carry high casualty rates, but are frequently limited to specifically trained members of societies. When these battles cross into the category of *total wars* (Markusen 1996) and incur mass casualties of non-combatants or civilians then these cases require further evaluation in the context of genocidal behaviors. Here, the context should be evaluated to see if knowledge and actions to prevent or limit non-combatant casualties were taken, or if these ignored, downplayed, *et cetera*.

Putting the issues of proving or demonstrating intent aside temporarily and just focusing on sanctioned social actions allows us to see the mosaic forming, these fragmented and seemingly unconnected behaviors can be arranged as part of a larger pattern that can together be understood as either encouraging or enacting genocidal behaviors. For instance, public sentiment refers to the agreement with and/or acceptance of prevailing views or differential treatment of populations or communities deemed as less desirable that would facilitate or encourage the destruction of that population. Although speaking of population destruction is protected in many nations by Constitutional laws protecting speech, we need to focus on is when these speech acts begin to devise or orchestrate violent actions and are then punishable. Does this mean that all speech should be censored? Of course not, however, we need to remain acutely sensitive to speech acts that are suggestively or directly planning action against a targeted community. In those cases where the intent of genocide is revealed, then jurisdiction should turn to the national and, as needed, international community for prevention. For example, when media systems are used to relay messages inciting violent actions against

a population these should not be ignored, and the prevention of any articulated events should become a priority. Under first amendment rights, US Americans are free to say much, even hateful things, but not when it impinges on the basic Human Rights of others, which include physical safety. Therefore, speech acts that encourage violence should be considered actions, not simply words. It is very disturbing that within the US we are more likely to restrict nudity than violence, and apparently are more likely to protect the rights of hate-mongers even when their speech is insidiously and even obviously encouraging violent actions than protect the rights of the targeted individuals or communities.

Questions that should be asked when speech acts involve the encouraging of hatred include: Is a specific population being targeted? If so, who is this population? What actions are called for against this population? Is there a clear link to this speech act and actions harming this population? In other words, the speech act is useful in the identification of targeted populations and can reveal intent. However, it should not be the only or main criteria to recognize the public sentiment.

Physical indications of genocide can include the harming or killing of members of a targeted population. Here we would expect to see an increase in occurrences of violent acts against the targeted population. This is where identification can be tricky, particularly when these are viewed as discrete events, or are dismissed as a civil problem. The international humanitarian communities need to work on defining when these events are part of a larger pattern, and decide at what point they can take actions to prevent further acts of genocide. The role of international intervention in both Rwanda and Darfur were slow and inadequate. In part, the intervention efforts in these areas were very limited prior and during the outbreak of violence. In both cases the deaths of hundreds of

thousands, and the exile of millions occurred prior to any level of stability, or large-scale international action.

Prior to the outbreak of violence there are often public identification marking events. Here, members of the target population are made visibly distinct or known from other members of the society. This is sometimes done by forcing individuals to wear a particular symbol, isolating the target population geographically, or even physically modifying/marketing individuals. Interestingly, this identification is often erased upon death of the individuals, particular after the introduction of the International Criminal Court (ICC) laws and punishments for war crimes, human rights, and genocide on a global level. This requires us, as a global community, to take the early identification events seriously.

### *Violence Targeting the Body*

Widespread torture, rape, and physical mutilation are underrepresented in research of acts of genocide. Although these behaviors are included in the definitions of genocide, they are poorly understood as mechanisms for perpetuating population eradication. Reducing a population's ability to survive by extensively inflicting torture, rape, and mutilation on the victimized population is genocidal. Although these actions are performed on the physical bodies of the victims, they also have strong influence on the mental well-being of the victims; working to deepen the existing power conditions that the perpetrators are claiming over their victims. Here I am referring to the systematic and widespread occurrences of these behaviors, not the isolated cases or those enacted on an individual level.

Violence that targets the body involve behaviors that not only promote fear throughout the victimized population, but are also used to mark the dominance of the perpetrators over the physical state of being of the victims through their humiliation and dehumanization. In studies of modern warfare, specifically *total wars* (where the lines between civilians and soldiers are blurred) there is much recognition of acts of violence enacted on civilians regardless of age or gender. Mark Markusen (1996) argues that these *total wars* have changed to include “genocidal tendencies.” What is of interest to me here is not that these are new actions, but that they are increasingly more apparent on the global scene because of increases in media technologies. Also of interest for bioarchaeological research is that in the cases of mutilation, we can often establish a relative timeline of events. For instance, if there is no bone re-growth and no sign of infection we are able to infer that the mutilation occurs as part of the mode of death or in postmortem contexts. The four headless-handless males included in the Mound 72, Cahokia burials and the similar interments at Dickson Mounds represent instances of postmortem mutilation of the bodies, because of the precision in the decapitation that would not have been likely if the mode of death was decapitation. It is additionally significant to note that these interments were composed of male individuals that were in otherwise excellent health, leading to interpretations that they were warriors, or representing individuals involved in rituals such as Skiri-Pawnee Morning Star sacrifice (Grinnell 1961; Hall 2000). Thus the scenario is different from individuals who are mutilated, but left to live—such as survivors of political and economic violence in Sierra Leone (Jackson 2004). In the case of the latter, there is a dehumanizing affect, as well as a decreased ease of survival for mutilated survivors.



In some societies where posthumous processing of the body is practiced, the removal of limbs during the processing may not represent a reduced status position, but may enact beliefs of disabling the dead (Hall 2000; Jacobi 2007). Modification of deceased individuals is seen as a preventative measure to prevent their vengeful returns, and is widespread belief in North America. Joan A. Lovisek (2007:54) writes, “In Kwakiutl belief, biological death occurs when the soul separates from the body. Decapitation was the proper treatment of enemies because dismemberment prevented the soul from returning to the body and harming the decapitator.” Distinctions between trophy-taking, attempts to reduce vengeance cycles by disabling the dead, and mutilation that results during genocidal events (i.e., dehumanization through the mutilation of the body) need to be consistently and continually recognized as separate behaviors in archaeological contexts. As with the patterns of violence themselves, these data will likely overlap in appearance, and will be inaccessible on an individual level. However, when viewed aside site and regional patterns, these data may be open for translation by trained archaeologists.

### *Violence Targeting the Mentality of Populations*

The identification of “serious mental harm” is one of the more difficult components of genocide to demonstrate and understand as separate from other forms of violence. In part, any form of violence can incorporate actions that produce serious mental harm to victims. These are frequently associated with humiliation and the witnessing of violent actions to the victims' in-group members. In the archaeological record and in cases without survivors, the category of “serious mental harm” is not

readily available.

Exile, on the other hand, is somewhat available for reconstruction. Although the forced movement or *exile* of a population (in part or whole) is not included in the CPPG and PrepComm descriptions of genocidal acts, it should be a consideration when evaluating potential genocide cases. The issue with including it in international legislation as its own genocidal act is that arguably not all exiles are coupled with the intent to destroy populations even with some casualties within the exiled community or population. However, exile should be used to bolster claims of genocide when accompanied with other actions that harm these populations. The coupling of exile with other destructive behaviors, such as widespread rape or outbreaks of violence toward those in exile would indicate that these are indeed intentional behaviors that are destroying the well being and potentially the survival of that population.

Exile is an extremely important aspect of genocidal behaviors, and it should be incorporated more frequently in genocide studies. Most known genocides include the exile and displacement of large portions of the targeted population. For example, in Burundi, at least 150,000 Hutu were exiled and formed refugee camps in 1972 (Lemarchand 1996:104). Malkki (1995) argues that it is through exile that the Hutu refugee identity is produced, much in the same manner that Alan Gallay (2002:113) describes ethnic identity formation (ethnogenesis) among indigenous North Americans as created in reaction to outsiders, or shared common enemies. Ethnicity then, was not a primary means of a social classification for these groups, and is too often conflated with biological and nationalistic concepts. Similarly, in Darfur since 2003, the estimates are that approximately three million people have been displaced, and at least two-hundred

thousand have been killed, although the actual number is disputed. Even though, these exiles are accompanied with widespread rape and mass killings, these conflicts are sometimes referred to as a political affairs—dealing with national instability, as the lines of ethnicity are not absolutely clear, such as recently argued about Darfur by supporters of the Sudanese government ('Issa 2007). Further, these exiles are traumatic, disruptive events that are entirely harmful.

We should not keep the discussions of types of violence focused on the scale of the event (i.e., number killed in these circumstances) as these figures are misleading. Additionally, it can be somewhat difficult to assign the beginning of these events, as they may at first appear as isolated occurrences of violence and intolerance, such as the arrest, disappearance or killing of intellectuals and social leaders, before the intent is recognizable. Exiles and the targeted removal of leaders are often linked to genocide events, but are less clear for reconstruction archaeologically, as these do not always leave durable evidence, or can appear similarly to migrations.

Two other cases of known exile is the 1915 genocide of Armenians by the young Turks, as well as the Indian Removal Acts in the United States that forced Native Americans to move westward and onto reservations. In the case of the Armenian exile, more than one and a half million Armenians were forced to leave their homes and country and encountered starvation, and violence along the way. One and a half million Armenians died as a direct result of the exile and treatment they encountered. However, these actions are still denied by some as genocide. In 2007 Nancy Pelosi (House Speaker for the US House of Representatives) proposed that the US government support recognition for the events surrounding the death of one and a half million Armenians as

genocide, but this recognition was delayed due to the perceived immediate need of maintaining amicable political relationships with the then current Turkish government. This negotiation secured bases for US military support and were part of geographic routes facilitating military access into Iraq. In this case, the current diplomatic goals were seen as taking precedence over recognizing these events as genocide. Part of the refusal likely related to the treatment and guilt that is sometimes placed on the descendants of perpetrators. Additionally, these diplomatic actions pointed to the continuously downplayed events that occurred with the brutal colonization of the United States.

Sadly, the mental harm of populations is not limited to the direct victims of these actions. Descendant and survivor guilt should be considered. For example, the perceptions and treatment of Germans today is necessarily effected by the history of Nazism. Gesine Schwan (2001) writes about the personal guilt felt by young school children taught of this horrific past, and the need to confront this guilt by the German population at large. While it absolutely and undeniably important to teach our young about these events, and other social injustices, we need to be careful of the methods used in making these events known, and specifically in who we identify as the guilty parties; not all Germans were Nazis. The focus needs to be on the processes of social violence and the realization that this is a tragic behavior that influences us all. No population is safeguarded from intolerance, or even the physical manifestations of that sentiment that *can* develop into acts of genocide. However, if we are able to identify and limit the behavior through promoting cultural understanding, in addition to reducing our perceptions of natural categories of populations, only then can we hope to see global change.

Similarly, the forced removal of Native Americans accounts for the displacement of large groups of people. Although the Trail of Tears and its history are recognized and discussed as a tragedy that occurred due to racism and land-grabbing efforts, rarely is it admitted that these too are related to genocidal actions (Jones 2006). Instead, when discussing the deaths that resulted from this forced removal, the focus shifts to unfortunate circumstances, and cold winters. This dismissal is to reduce notions of intention. Despite the strides in genocide research, this denial demonstrates just how contested this territory of research remains.

A final point of importance in including exile as a more valued indication of genocide, at least as supporting data in our reconstructions, is how invaluable it would be in evaluating prehistoric cases of potential genocide, where physical data are present, but sparse. If there is clear evidence of mass exile alongside limited burial data, this would provide another possible source of material remains to support claims of the event type. Discovery of this evidence is severely limited by the passage of time and other archaeological constraints, specifically the archaeological record that is best suited to identify patterns of behavior through the aggregation of material culture over longer periods of time. Without records or witnesses of exiles, these data are sometimes missed archaeologically if the event took place over a shorter period of time and did not leave much material evidence to follow. Moreover, exile is a particularly tricky phenomenon to detect archaeologically, because the exile data may sometimes appear like migration practices.

*Violence Targeting Population Reproduction*

One of the more understudied areas of genocide is the preventing or limiting of births of a population, with the goal that the population will be eradicated. This should not be viewed as identical to some recent governmental restrictions on birth that might focus on increasing the costs for families with more than the culturally desired number of children, as has been enacted in China and in Singapore (Cai 2008; Yap 2003). Although these governmental restrictions may be widely critiqued, the intent to destroy a specific target population is not usually clear. One could argue that the restrictive behavior increases violence and promotes violent actions or infanticide targeted at unwanted children, particularly females. In these cases, the intent to harm specifically females by the government or cultural restrictions on birth must be made clear—otherwise it is impossible to pose the argument for genocide under current legislation. For instance, if these restrictions only led to the infanticide practices by only the lowest socio-economic classes, then the classification may overlap with genocidal behaviors that target specific groups within societies that may be muted into socio-economic categories. This muting of genocidal behaviors as class-based conflict is apparent in the recently released book and dvd set produced by Russia to explain the role of hunger in the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933. This famine targeted farmers, who were primarily from the Ukrainian population; although this is refuted by Vladimir Kozlov, the head of of Russia's Federal Archive Agency, who claims that the Kulug farmers were the target to prevent future political troubles (Associated Press February 25<sup>th</sup> 2009). To clarify, female-targeted infanticide could be a form of gender motivated *gendercide*, but the attempt to destroy the females of a specific population would need to be demonstrated in order to be classified as genocide.

Genocidal acts that target population reproduction include the forced sterilization

of reproductive members of a population, with the intent to reduce or ultimately destroy that population. These actions do not necessarily rely on the use of brute physical force, but can also involve the manipulation of information; for instance, knowingly distributing misinformation, or otherwise deceiving individuals of a target population into participating in activities that reduce or stop their reproductive ability. For example, William Bradford (2006) argues that Native American women were forced to endure sterilization. Purposefully reducing population fertility is a genocidal action. Bradford (2006) argues that Native American women were targeted and encouraged to participate in fertility reduction procedures with the goal of limiting their reproduction, thus reducing the Native American population. Timothy Pauketat's (2010:25) recent re-visitation of Jerome Rose's (1999) bioarchaeological assessment of the Mound 72 interments—where Rose demonstrated that women were disproportionately included in the mound, and that this group was composed of young, reproductive, foreign females who were selectively chosen for inclusion in these deadly rituals—reiterates the point that these females “might have served to eliminate the reproductive members of some honored, but rival kin group.” The targeting of the reproductive success of a rival population, whether that population should be considered honored or not, is by definition an act of genocide. By reducing a population's fertility, the success of the entire population is limited.

The notion of reduced fertility is a topic that is overlooked by many researchers, who focus on the killing aspect of genocidal behavior. In part, the problem is that the evidence of reproductive targeting is sometimes less visible, at least initially, and without longer-term demographic research that includes the analysis of the fertility curves and

population growths in communities. Furthermore, there are issues of conflation of fertility reduction with *gendercide* practices (i.e., killing of non-favored genders, or as a result from some warfare practices where women are excluded or absent from battle), but if gender that is targeted happens to come from another population or several other populations, then the possibility that these individuals were killed with the intent of reducing or stopping fertility is clear, and should not be ignored in these discussions. Of note, if the *gendercide* practices can be linked to individuals in their reproductive years, or as targeting children then the argument that these were attempts to reduce populations by targeting reproductive success are strengthened.

### **Issues in Discerning Intent, Systematic**

Given the complexity and overlapping results of physical components of genocide, demonstrating these acts as genocide is a grueling task. However, these difficulties pale in comparison to identifying and demonstrating genocidal intent, as intent is often both denied and obscured. Furthermore, the inclusion of the term “systematic” in definitions of genocide, while viewed as an essential feature in defining genocide, the descriptor “systematic” can obscure the role of individuals who enacted violence against others, with the intent to destroy or do severe harm, without direct orders to do so. The systematic performance of these acts of violence can be used as pivotal evidence in pursuing perpetrators. However, we tend to forget that this idea of “systematic killing” is often just as problematic to construct, and also can vary in its distribution during a series of events. It can be further complicated by the systematic refusal to recognize or to address the targeting of populations for acts of violence by the



society at large (Kovach 2006). The legalistic focus on documentation hinders definitions greatly, as this is the primary way in which systematic and widespread intent are demonstrated.

Alain Destexhe (1995) writes about the conflation of acts of extreme violence and genocide. He argues that although there have been cases of extreme violence since World War II, not all have the same underlying motivation of “ethnic cleansing,” and by using terms like *genocide* and *Holocaust* in separate conditions, it reduces the unique goal of systematically eradicating a population that would characterize genocidal behaviors. Destexhe (1995) writes that there are three events in the twentieth century that should be classified as *genocide* including the Turkish slaughter of Armenians, the Nazi slaughter of Jews, and the Hutu’s slaughter of the Tutsis. The major distinction being made between the violence of war and genocide is one of motivation. To distinguish warfare acts of violence from genocide, Destexhe discusses how genocide is enacted with the goal of the annihilation of a group of *people*, whereas in war the violence is more of a means rather than the end.

Destexhe continues by outlining what he sees as an abuse of a humanitarian stance, and argues that there is a strong need for a real international tribunal to be in place to deal with the perpetrators of genocide. What occurred in Rwanda was genocide, and in Destexhe's mind the United Nations and the United States in particular, should not have remained silent, essentially turning a blind eye to these events. He further discusses how this inertia was enabled under the protection of new legislation, such as the Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) signed by President Clinton. This directive allows the United States government to refuse some of the demands of the United Nations that did not

directly impact the United States and its policies. Destexhe (1995) argues that recommendations of intervention can be ignored as long as certain classifications, such as “genocide” are not used to describe an event. He further claims that the refusal of the United Nations to formally recognize the situation in Rwanda as a genocide event that would have forced intervention, prevented the required deployment of military intervention to these nations under contracts of international treaty. The United Nations couched these events in Rwanda in terms of civil unrest and ethnic or tribal feuding, until the bloodshed began to dissipate. However, this is a misinterpretation of what the international legislation actually says, as discussed by Gregory Stanton, head of *Genocide Watch*. Stanton (2004) notes that there are misconceptions about what legal actions are required for nations who participate in the United Nations Genocide pact to abide. These misconceptions are often focused on the concepts of prevention and intervention of genocidal acts. Specifically, nations are not compelled to act in limiting these behaviors, although popular belief incorrectly interprets it as required. Nations are, however, required to punish and expel from their nations those found guilty of committing these acts.

Among journalists, the general public, diplomats, and lawyers who haven’t read the Genocide Convention, there is a common misconception that a finding of genocide would legally require action to suppress it. Under this misconception, having been informed that the U.S. would take no action in Rwanda in 1994, State Department lawyers ordered avoidance of the word. They made their legal conclusion fit the Procrustean bed of U.S. policy. They committed legal malpractice. (Stanton 2004)

Therefore, even where genocidal behaviors are not misidentified or otherwise misconstrued; participating nations are only required to get involved after the fact. In these cases, the prosecution and expulsion of identified and caught war criminals is required of countries participating in these treaties.

Unfortunately, the Genocide Convention carries no such legal compulsion to act. It legally requires only that states-parties pass national laws against genocide and then prosecute or extradite those who commit the crime. Article VIII of the Convention says they also “may call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take such action under the Charter of the United Nations as they consider appropriate for the prevention and suppression of acts of genocide.” But they aren’t legally required to do so. Article I of the Genocide Convention creates a moral obligation to prevent genocide, but it does not dictate military intervention or any other particular measures. (Stanton 2004)

Its importance relates to clearly demonstrating intent, used to distinguish genocidal actions from less widespread or isolated cases of crimes based on other forms of discrimination. The systematic nature of these events are then used legally to show precognition of that intent (i.e., that it was previously articulated, orchestrated, *et cetera*). However, it is not always simple to prove that an event was systematically arranged, as this systematic sentiment may not include direct orders or planning of the entire event. Instead it is the accumulation of the parts, of the socially sanctioned treatment of disliked populations that are not always easily aggregated until it is far too late. Additionally, the plans themselves are often in verbal speech acts that are not included in writings, but that may be later used as evidence against perpetrators. For example, when Liisa Malkki (1995) spoke with Hutu refugees she found that some were explicitly told to harm or kill their neighbors lest they be harmed or killed themselves. The use of fear and coercion of individuals undeniably demonstrates that this was a systematic killing event. However, there is not durable/material evidence that would be available in cases of past events, especially in the prehistoric period or in non-literate societies. This is exemplified in the destruction of Native American populations. For instance, while exploring the colonial treatment of Native Americans, we do not necessarily expose direct orders to harm or kill (there are a few scattered notes, including the 1763 correspondences between Jeffrey Amherst and Colonel Henry Bouquet), but the punishments for the mistreatment of

Native Americans were often non-existent, or ignored in their enforcement. This reified the systematic mistreatment and killing of these populations, but is less easily recognized than discovering direct orders to kill. This structural violence can disguise the intent, or can even involve a silent refusal to punish the perpetrators.

Ironically, the problems with proving intent in the modern setting should not hinder some archaeological research of events that precede an international awareness and the creation of laws for the punishment of perpetrators. Prior to the earliest legislation in the 1940's, genocide was not defined, though the behavior was present much earlier. For instance, in B.C.E. 150, Cato the Elder incited the Roman legions to take decisive actions against the Carthaginians by evoking fears of continued warfare leading to the devastation of Carthage in the Third Punic War. He ended every Senate speech with the phrase "Carthage must be destroyed" (Sherman and Salisbury 2006:132).

Lemkin coined the term *genocide* with both the Armenian exile and the Nazi Holocaust in mind, both of which were heavily influenced by the great advances in technology and communication systems of the early twentieth century. Furthermore, he was also entrenched in examples of nationalistic violence that skewed his definition (Jones 2006:8-12). The increases in transportation and communication technologies allowed the movement of the exiles to be further coordinated and enforced, and the deaths of millions to be carried out on an industrialized scale. However, the behavior itself, that is the behavior to eliminate other populations was not new nor unique. It extends into the distant past, but is more recognizable today with the globalized advances in media and communication. Furthermore, the reaction to international laws has shifted these actions. Without a formalized system of punishment for these acts, perpetrators

would have little motivation to hide their victims. Intuitively, the way victims of genocidal actions are incorporated into the archaeological record prior to these laws would be very different than those events following the formalization of genocide. Archaeologists need to contend with issues in archaeological visibility. In other words, archaeological recovery is never fully complete, and if populations were targeted and not buried, they would not survive to the present and there are large issues in recognition of targeted populations.

### **Recognizing Genocidal Behaviors in the Past or Without Records**

Patterns of violence are sometimes erased by individuals seeking to cover up these actions, and others are hidden by the passing of time. Sadly, the differential usage of the terms associated with genocide currently enables those who commit these actions, the ability to deny by claiming that they were not targeting any of the protected populations, nor a recognized group. History teaches us is that often in cases of extreme violence and genocidal actions, the targeting of populations for destruction is not simple, nor is it singular. The Nazis did not simply kill Jewish peoples, they killed non-Aryans. Their population purging removed all groups that did not fit their ideal. Perhaps this can be extended into past situations where more than one population is targeted for eradication, such as at Cahokia's Mound 72 where the reproductive success of another population or populations was selectively included in the ceremonious killings, as well as a group of individuals who were later killed, and were more closely related to others buried in this location. Again, secular and religious behaviors are not mutually exclusive, and often can and do inform the creative processes of each other.

I theorize that the practice of intentionally obscuring or disguising acts of genocide through burial in clandestine, unmarked graves is a direct reaction to the international legislation, and that these will not occur with the same frequency in genocide acts prior the 1949 Geneva Convention, or at least since there has been media efforts to find, document, and expose these events. In other words, the practice of constructing clandestine, unmarked burials is a modern practice that limits the recovery of evidence for prosecution that is not strongly represented in the archaeological cases. It takes much more effort to cover the individuals, even if large, shared pits were used to dispose of the dead, and many killed were likely left on the ground surface as warnings to others. Unless the goals of killing a population included moving into their village, or that these killings were part of performances at the captors' own village, then this is likely an extra effort that would not necessarily have been a goal in past societies. However, archaeologists have other difficulties to grapple with, as discussed below.

When archaeologists discover the burial of mass graves of killed individuals they are rarely described as potentially victims of genocidal behaviors. Instead, we read about human sacrifice practices, warfare events, or as massacres without really discussing these as similar events or critically evaluating these events as possibly targeting a population for destruction. Part of this reluctance is to avoid the issue of proving the intent to eradicate a specific population, as mentioned above. Again, even in modern contexts, the intent is often unclear or intentionally obscured. Further, archaeologists tend to interpret the archaeological record at sites as produced from a singular behavioral process (i.e., the deaths of these individuals indicate the sacrifice of retainers, or the killing of prisoners of war) as opposed to multiple actions that perhaps should not be viewed as mutually

exclusive behaviors (Goldstein 1981). There is little reason to exclude these acts as being wholly confined to “ritual” as opposed to secular or warfare related behaviors (Steadman 2008). Additionally, there is no reason to exclude religious behaviors that include the mass killing of populations, as a purging of non-wanted members from our purview. “Ritual sacrifice and the search to identify a generative scapegoat – a social class or ethnic or racial group on which to pin the blame for the social and economic problems that arise – is also a common precondition in the evolution of genocide” (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004:14). Even with the classification of genocide on the table, we should not exclude the ritualization of warfare and other secular behaviors. Although not all wars include acts of genocide, some do, and this variability also occurred in prehistory.

Further obscuring the analysis of prehistoric cases, the problem of *equifinality* must also be addressed. Different processes can produce virtually the same results archaeologically, thus requiring multiple lines of evidence or the larger site context to be included in analysis. Specifically for this discussion we need to recognize when mass graves are the result of genocidal acts versus other processes, such as the mass burial of individuals whose death were the result of a natural epidemic. Detailed bioarchaeological investigations can often distinguish these phenomena, but are complicated in cases where there are little to no indications of pathological markers left on the remains (Wood et al. 1992).

We also must not assume that a series of mass burials indicates that the same processes of inclusion and exclusion were enacted for all the interments. In other words, these burials are likely to encode and may even represent different phenomena as well as meanings. This is especially true in cases where there is a prolonged use of a burial site

where the symbolism and meanings associated with death and burial may have shifted (Deetz and Dethlefsen 1967). Since Mound 72 was used for over a hundred or more years, there are likely transitions not only in form, but in the range of meanings linked to the mythic citations and secular data. Even though we cannot reconstruct these shifts (there is far too little preserved material data and no records that would explain any variations in symbolic interpretations), we should acknowledge that these shifts are likely. This allows us to connect similar symbols that might not perfectly match each other, but are related.

Further complicating these interpretations, Mound 72 was not a cemetery used continuously for burials. It was episodic in its construction and use, although it was used multiple times. This is suggestive of a specific and purposeful use of the Mound 72 area for burials that likely conform to a culturally coherent pattern. Also, it was used concurrently with other burial locations at Cahokia. Unfortunately, much of the data from other known cemeteries at Cahokia have been lost to plows, time, and other destructive practices. Others remain covered and have not been excavated to date. Of the few found and discussed throughout this dissertation, there are several that shared characteristics with Mound 72. There is no way to know if Mound 72 was the only mound that contained the killed-pit graves at Cahokia, but we know that it is not the only grave to have contained killed individuals (Alt and Pauketat 2007). To truly begin to understand the events at Cahokia, all data from these cemeteries need to be recovered and compiled for analysis.

The final point that I would like to make in this chapter is that we must be extremely cautious in our attempts to interpret population identity. We cannot



automatically assume that the differences recognized by populations are solely based on conceptions of ethnicity, nor on biologically distinct populations. The overlap between the cultural constructions of ethnicity and biological distinctions are too often conflated, which is clearly evident in current cultural research. Ethnicity is not a simple or necessarily easily identifiable marker of populations, especially without knowledge from extant members of the ethnicity present. Also, as made clear in Liisa Malkki's (1995) research, ethnicity is a fluid social construction that is not always easily recognized, even by those whom are attempting to delineate populations based on socially constructed identities. Perhaps the concept of *communities* works as a better descriptive term for the population distinctions that may be visible to bioarchaeologists and other researchers, because communities can be composed on ethnic lines, but are not limited to ethnicity. Furthermore, not all population distinctions are based on ethnic differences and therefore, other recognized population differences could enter these discussions. An additional benefit to changing the dialogue to include concepts of communities for discussion and protection as identifiable populations is that communities are recognized by most as dynamic groupings that are constructed similarly to ethnic groups, from both internal and external factors (Barth 1969; Cohen 1978; Vincent 1974). Communities are socially created phenomena with identifiable, although shifting and fluid, boundaries. Compared to ethnicity, where scholars confuse and conflate this term with biological population distinctions, communities are recognized as social constructions, although these constructions are frequently based on a shared genetic heritage.

## **Summary**

Social constructionist theories that are focused population identity help to explain how these relationships are developed from both internal and external factors.

Populations, like individuals, continually create and recreate themselves. These creations are recognizable, but are constantly shifting, merging, dissolving, and redefining their fluid boundaries. They are mercurial in quality (Vincent 1974), and therefore, we need to better understand these dynamics in order to create laws that can protect populations as they change.

Exploring the range in secular and religious violence included in Cahokia's Mound 72 burials has been a fruitful endeavor because it forced me to ask specific questions about finding the boundaries in both violent/peaceful behaviors as well as critique how the boundaries between populations can be identified. Although I found these boundaries between forms of violence were more overlapped than I had anticipated, there were some distinctions that were apparent at times. These overlaps, namely in the scale and motivations behind these behavior and the difficulties I found in defining targeted populations, led me to critique the use of older definitions of populations and differences in forms of violence. Current understandings of population construction and identities have drastically changed since international laws were first formed and are adaptive to population dynamics.

## **--CHAPTER NINE--**

### **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

Our shared human history is riddled with both peacemaking and warring events and banal behaviors that fall under every category in the spectrum. These behaviors are often performed simultaneously within populations, including at the individual level. As David Dye (2009) argues, patterns of peacemaking and violence are interconnected, but they are not linear patterns of behavior as constructed in continuum models (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004). I envision the enactments of violence and peace as overlapping cycles, corresponding to a Venn diagram. There are multiple sets of behaviors available during encounters between individuals and populations, although trends will emerge based on which actions are socially sanctioned and permitted based on the specific cultural mindset. Though each set of behaviors is mostly contained as a cohesive unit, the boundaries of these are flexible and they are not entirely discrete.

During the discussion in chapter eight, I wrote about the importance of recognizing some distinctions between categories of violence in our interpretations. There are several important goals associated with maintaining interpretive categories. First, these boundaries are important for instructive and practical knowledge purposes: we need to be able to recognize and distinguish actions as purposeful behaviors that are resultant from varied motivations. Specifically, we should not gloss over religiously linked and violent enactments of mythico-histories as entirely distinctive behavioral-spheres from more secular-based motivations of violence, as this separation is often too rigidly constructed. Second, there do need to be some identifiable population boundaries,

although these can be fluidly constructed. These boundaries demonstrate the enactment of violence in varied contexts, and can point to selective tendencies in the demographic and social composition of victims. Though there are sometimes evident boundary distinctions created between perpetrators and victims there is no specific formula that we can apply that will easily recognize these lines. Instead, each situation requires individualized contextual analysis.

In depth discussions of the categorical and historical ranges of these behaviors and the events they produce is one way to work toward understanding both peaceful and violent interactions. Eventually, these discussions help inform humanitarian efforts and groups like *Genocide Watch* that aim at assisting in the aftermath of violent encounters and also to help reduce the occurrence of violence events that aim to destroy. We need to encourage these discussions, particularly in settings that join together participants from multiple diverse fields to go beyond anthropology. This broad participation will facilitate efforts to make the use of terminologies converge, rather than continuing to overspecialize and lose translational qualities in describing events between fields of research.

Newer concepts of the constructive processes of identity and the performance of dynamically formed relationships are useful concepts that should be included in discussions of violence. Identities extend beyond the level of the individual and are actively shared by group-level collectives. These are non-fixed, non-bounded phenomena, however, these can be identifiable. The revising of dated knowledge about dynamic population constructions and the systematic nature of socially sanctioned behavior are long overdue across academic disciplines as well as in legislation. Current

anthropological understandings of each of these areas not only allow researchers to gain deeper insights into these concepts specifically, but more importantly, these updated understandings help in the identification of the forms of violence by being better able to recognize the populations involved and how each operate within the frames of their own selective perceptions. This will increase the ability to recognize these patterns as they arise in the international community.

Anthropologists continually explore how human populations aggregate and discuss how to recognize distinctions being made between and within these groupings. Though some bioarchaeological researchers employ strictly biological models of populations in their research, there have been fruitful concepts developing that merge cultural and biological aspects of populations; these include concepts of *biocultural* groupings (Beck 1995; Buikstra 2005). This merging of biological and cultural concepts of population formations is important in encouraging continued multifield dialogues within anthropology; however, there are still obvious shortcomings that are likely a result of several centuries of racialized thinking in Western thought that need to be addressed further. Namely, this refers to the (mis)conceptions of culturally constructed ideas of *ethnicity* being misused to refer to the primarily hereditary biological distinctions in populations (Kakaliouras 2010; Ousley et al. 2009; Sparks and Jantz 2003). These concepts are not interchangeable, as made abundantly clear by both historic and ethnographic accounts of populations (Alt 2006; Anderson 1991; Appadurai 1990; Barth 1969; Brown and Mussell 1985; Buikstra 2005; Cohen 1978; D'Alisera 2004; Emerson and Hargrave 2000; Gallay 2002; Gilroy 1990; Herfeld 1986; Kondo 1990; Malkki 1995; Vincent 1974). These accounts demonstrate the complexity in social constructions of

ethnicity, and further these show that ethnicity cannot be simply equated with the biological makeup of population. Even differences that are detected by diet cannot always distinguish ethnicities, personal preferences, economic availability, gender, age, and other personalized features could influence access (Brown and Mussell 1985; Powell et al. 1991). Similarly, shared diets between ethnicities could mute some distinctions, such as variations in timing of food consumption if culturally defined (i.e., fasting behaviors that sometimes restrict foods that are normally culturally acceptable). Furthermore, differences in perceptions of quality in the cut of meats, or restrictions in availability of certain foods may relate to age, gender, and economic differences that will not be apparent in ubiquitous stable isotope analyses.

In a related thought, making direct comparisons using demographic and cultural materials to assign social hierarchy to buried individuals, does not assess mortuary contexts in a satisfying manner. These are economically derived models that frequently rely on concepts of direct and absolute representation of economic hierarchies in burial. Interpretations are then reduced in order to fit models that are based on ideas of differential status and hierarchy based on the quantity and interpreted value of goods as commodities. We cannot assume that populations are all performing burial rituals to express their conceptions of social hierarchy, inequality, and positionality. Instead, mortuary ceremonies can commemorate lives by remembering the deceased, and can offer closure through ritual mourning by the living (Pearson 1993). Ritualized mourning performances can also extend far beyond the burial process itself, based on culturally accepted structures, and are enacted to heighten roles in social relationships between people on individual and group levels. We need to contextualize burials in ways that

make sense on a case-by-case basis and not simply rely on economic models to explain differential burials. At Cahokia this entails conceptualizing and reconstructing these data incorporating the captive-other as a status included for analysis, rather than interpreting burial distinctions between captive and non-captives as economically based distinctions.

## **Summation**

When I began this project, I was looking to evaluate the violence evident in Mound 72, Cahokia. This focus included an analysis that distinguished between symbolic and actualized violence as expressed in the mode of death and mortuary treatment of victims of these events. I was strongly focused on the killed mixed group of 39 individuals contained in Feature 229 lower of Mound 72. The arrangement of these individuals was reminiscent to images of individuals killed during acts of genocidal violence from World War II, the Cambodian Killing Fields, and more. I had incorrectly assumed that if I were to explore concepts of genocidal violence in Mound 72 that these would likely provide the strongest evidence. Ironically, and rather unexpectedly, the females who were killed and interred in four known mass-graves proved the more demonstrative example of genocidal tendencies, because the strict restrictions on age, sex, and distinctive (perhaps as non-locals) status of these buried individuals. These aspects were indisputable factors in their selection and would have direct consequences on the reproductive success of the population(s) where they were derived.

Ultimately, this dissertation has resulted in me rejecting ideas that portray genocidal behaviors as newly constructed forms of violence, as well as those that fail to recognize the complexity in these behaviors. Instead, I argue that these events have a

much deeper presence in human history. The scale and performance of modern genocidal behaviors are difficult to dismiss and these actions are often recognized by the general population. Ancient cases are much more difficult to detect and require us to adjust the scope of our research. For instance, I found that the scale of violent actions and the ways in which populations sanction and participate in these behaviors, have been disrupted by the imagined industrialization and increased magnitude of these destructive activities. In other words, recent mass killing events that involve casualties on the scale of tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, and even arriving in the millions—in series of related events—skew interpretations to only include these enormous events when discussing mass killings that should be viewed as genocide. This tends to mute the similar structures and ideological systems that encourage, enact, and perform these behaviors that have operated on smaller scales, but with the same intention of population destruction. As noted in several instances, the smaller events aggregate into larger social patterns. Perceptions of ancient events as singular occurrences further removes these from being interpreted within the frame of the larger social pattern and causes large interpretive discrepancies between ancient and modern forms of violence.



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College of Letters & Science

*Department of Anthropology*

September 16, 2010

Kathryn M. Koziol

**J. Patrick Gray**  
*Chair*

Sabin Hall  
P.O. Box 413  
Milwaukee, WI  
53201-0413  
414 229-4175 phone  
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Dear Ms. Koziol:

The Department of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is aware of and approves of the publishing of some images by Ann Early and Jerome Rose from Mound 72, Cahokia, in your dissertation and a chapter in an upcoming bioarchaeology volume edited by Debra Martin, Ryan Harrod, and Ventura Perez.

We understand that the specific images are identified in separate permission documentation that you have received from Early and Rose. The images include many different features from all the Submounds, with burials from Features 219 and 229 the primary focus of your dissertation. Features 229 and the four excavated female graves are the focus of the upcoming publication. You also intend to include a map of Mound 72 and some images in Feature 229 showing visible trauma experienced by the individuals.

You have permission to use the photographs requested as long as you acknowledge the Archaeological Research Laboratory and the Department of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

We also request that you send an unbound copy of your dissertation to our department for our archaeology library. The mailing address is listed in the letterhead above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Patrick Gray".

J. Patrick Gray, Chair  
Department of Anthropology

JPG: klk



UNIVERSITY OF  
ARKANSAS

J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences  
*Department of Anthropology*

12 October 2010

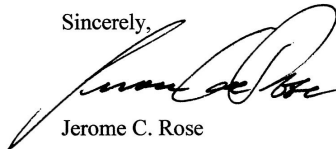
Dear Ms. Koziol,

I am aware of and approve the use of photographic images that I had taken during field sessions at Cahokia in your dissertation and subsequent papers that may result from that research.

I understand that these specific images are of the Mound 72 burials and associated mound features, and am further aware that you will modify these images using image-editing software. The images include different features and burials from all the submounds, with burials from Features 229 and 229 the primary focus in your dissertation, although other images from features will be included as insets on an overall map of the Mound 72 features.

You have my permission to use these images as long as you acknowledge them as coming from me and my field experience under the direction of Prof. Melvin Fowler formerly with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Sincerely,



Jerome C. Rose

Smithsonian  
National Museum of the American Indian

4220 Silver Hill Road, Suitland, MD 20746-2863 301-238-6624, x6370 (fax) 301-238-3206

APPLICANT	
Ms. Kathy Koziol via email	21 October 2010
PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR USE OF THE FOLLOWING IMAGE:  Permission is granted for the use of the attached images in a dissertation  Four 300 dpi 8x10 tif images (please see attached reports) uploaded to the NMAI FTP site (you will be sent instructions via email for downloading) @ \$20.00/image: \$80.00  Permissions Fees have been waived  Courtesy, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution	
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**Image Number:** D150853

**Type:** Digital

**Title:**

**Description:** Middle Mississippian shell gorget with two perforations, incised decoration representing a human figure kneeling, holding human head in one hand and club in the other, circa 1250-1350 AD. Four full views

**Culture of Subject:** Middle Mississippian Tradition (archaeological culture)

**Site:** USA; Tennessee; Sumner County; Castalian Springs; Castalian Springs Mound Group

**Photographer:** Walter Larrimore  
Ernest Amoroso, Non-Indian

**Date of Subject:** AD 1250-1350

**CD/DVD Location:** Srvy\_CD06\_Tiff; Srvy\_DVD02\_FFF  
CDD00464\_TIF ; DVD00169\_FFF

**Remarks:** RAW DIGITAL FILE LOCATION: Srvy\_DVD02\_FFF  
TIFF DIGITAL FILE LOCATION: Srvy\_CD06\_Tiff  
PHOTO REMARKS: Found with 150854.000, 150855.000, and 150856.000. See D150853 (best), T150853, N20815, N27723, S01508

D150853



**Image Number:** T214088

**Type:** Transparency

**Title:** Warrior Effigy Pipe

**Description:** Large red stone pipe bowl representing a man beheading a victim, circa AD 1200-1600. All full 3/4 views

**Culture of Subject:**

**Site:** USA; Oklahoma; Le Flore County; ; Spiro Mounds

**Photographer:** David Heald, Non-Indian

Karen Furth

Carmelo Guadagno (Jimmy Guadagno), Non-Indian

**Date of Subject:** AD 1200-1600

**CD/DVD Location:** CDT00021

DVDT00173

**Remarks:** PHOTO REMARKS: See T214088 A-C (A version is best), S02310, S02366, N25349-52  
TIFF DIGITAL FILE LOCATION: CDT00021 (Heald version)

T214088



**Catalog Number:** 189121.000

**Object ID:** Conch Shell

**Count:** 1

**Title:**

**Creation Date:** 1200-1600 [1200-1400 per Richard Townsend]

**Culture:**

**Country:** USA

**State:** Oklahoma

**County:** Le Flore County

**City/Town:**

**Island Name:**

**Site Name:** Spiro Mounds

**Provenience:** Craig Mound (Temple Mound)

**Materials:** Shells > Conch shell/shells

**Techniques:** General: Surface modifications > Incised

**Artist Name:**

**Acquisition Source:** Clemens, Mrs. James B.

**Method and Date:** Gift or Presentation/Presented; 1/1/1935

**Information from Catalog Card:** NOTE: PUBLICATION: Masterworks Show - 1973 15

NUMBER: TRANSPARENCY (T): 4x5

NUMBER: SLIDE (S) OR KODACHROME: 4428

NUMBER: LANTERN SLIDE (L): 1140

NUMBER: NEGATIVE (N): 21090, 21105, 23431, 25375

NOTE: EXHIBITION: Masterworks Show - 1973 15

NOTE: PUBLICATION: See: Plate 67 "Indian Art in America"

NOTE: OTHER HANDWRITTEN: length 4 by 34cm

ORIGINAL OBJECT DESCRIPTION: Large conch shell, incised decoration

ACQUISITION INFO: Presented by Mrs. James B. Clemens

SITE INFORMATION: from Catalog Card : Oklahoma : Le Flore County : Temple Mound

189121.000

10/21/2010

1



**Catalog Number:** 196753.000

**Object ID:** Pipe bowl and cahumet pipestem

**Count:** 2

**Title:**

**Creation Date:** 1880-1910

**Culture:** Wahpetonwan Dakota (Wahpeton Sioux)

**Country:** USA

**State:** South Dakota

**County:**

**City/Town:**

**Island Name:**

**Site Name:**

**Provenience:**

**Materials:** Stone/Mineral/Rock > Catlinite/pipestone  
Wood > Wood  
Feathers > Eagle feather/feathers (Golden eagle)  
Hair > Horsehair  
Feathers > Hawk feather/feathers  
Feathers/Birdskin > Mallard duck skin/skins  
Sewing materials: Sinew > Sinew  
Paint/Drawing: Paints/Pigments > Paint  
Dyes > Dye/dyes

**Techniques:** General: Shaped/molded > Carved  
General: Surface modifications > Wrapped  
Painted/Tinted/Coated > Painted  
Painted/Tinted/Coated > Dyed

**Artist Name:**

**Acquisition Source:**

**Method and Date:** Museum Purchase/Purchased; 1/1/1937

**Information from Catalog Card:** ORIGINAL OBJECT DESCRIPTION: Cahumet pipe of catlinite with wooden stem decorated with hair, feathers, etc.  
ACQUISITION INFO: Purchase  
CULTURE INFORMATION: Wahpeton Sioux

196753.000

10/21/2010

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